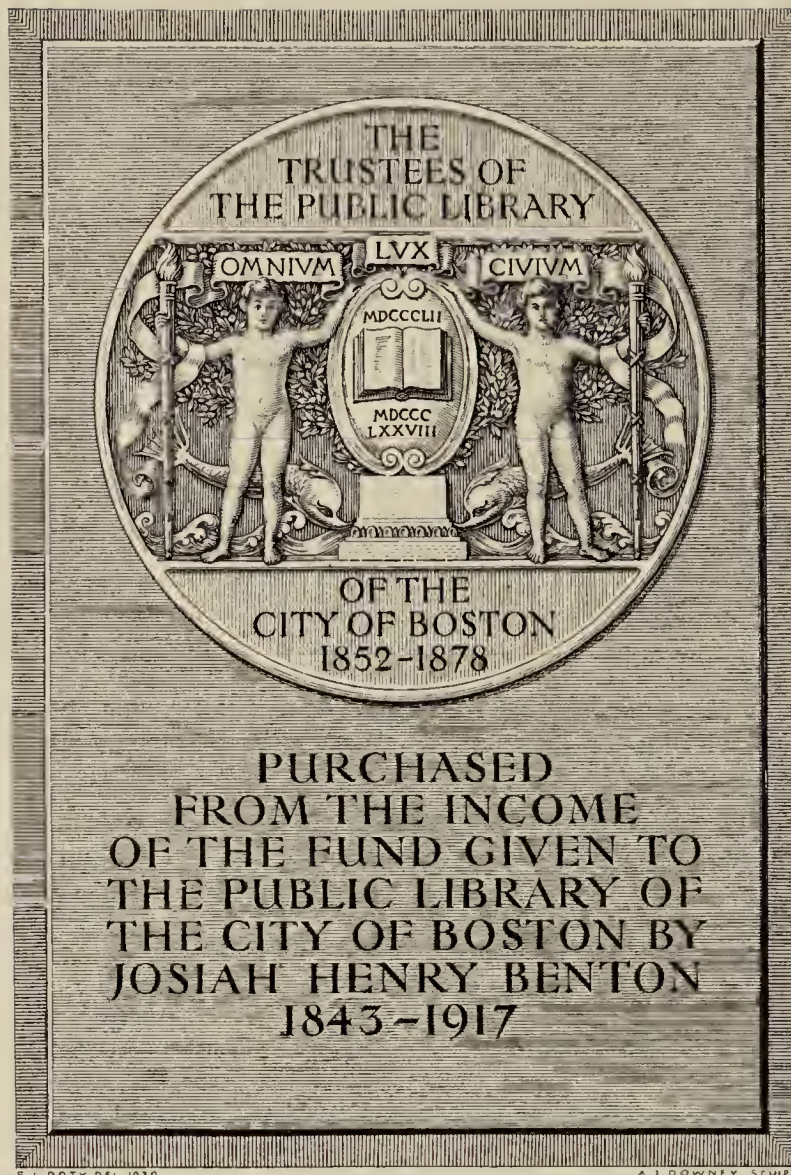




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Note,

THIS Discourse was drawn up during the Regency and Authority of the Old *Service-Book*, since which time, the many Diseases cleaving to it, have (it seems) occasioned the Death of it : and this, the raising up of another in its stead, of a new Calculation : So that, I know not whether the Scrutinie here made into the former Book, will in all Points touch with the latter : I suppose the Herings in the one Barrel, differ not much from those in the other.



Common-Prayer-Book DEVOTIONS,
Episcopal Delusions;
OR, THE
SECOND DEATH
OF
The Service-Book.

WHEREIN,

The unlawfulness (with advantage) of the Imposition of Liturgies, or stinted Forms of Prayer, or of the Worship of God (and more especially of the *English Service-Book*) is clearly and plainly demonstrated from the Scriptures, and grounds in Reason; with Answers to the Arguments and Pleas insisted on, in Defence of the said Impositions.

But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was, 2 Tim. 3. 9.

His Spirit was stirred within him, when he saw the City wholly given to Idolatry. Acts 17. 16.

For this cause was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the Truth, John, 18. 37.

— And so will I go in unto the King, which is not according to the Law: and if I perish, I perish; Hester 4. 16.

Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? Gal. 4. 16.

Adulterum est, impium est, sacrilegium est, quicquid humano furore instituitur, ut dispositio divina violetur. Cypr. Lib. 1. Ep. 8.

Veritati potest nemo prescribere, non spacium temporum, no patrocinia personarum. Tertul. de Veland. Viig.

Doctis, & in speciem sanctis, hoc consuetum, ut ceteris Christo obnixius resistent. Mulculus in Mat. p. 423.

X Benton. 666. W10C

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To the Conscientious Reader.

CHRISTIAN READER,

THIS ensuing Discourse needeth no Epistle to commend it, nor humane Patron to protect it, an Epistolary Porch can add no more to its worth, than a well placed Beauty-Spot to a good Complection, whose Brightness is set off by the contrary Blackness; The Workman was a person as well furnished with Stuff, Tools & Skill for Temple-work, as most this last learned Age hath produced, & the weighty Truth he so strenuously presseth in this ensuing Tract, was not the exercise of his Skill and Parts, but the genuine birth of his Heart and Conscience; a Truth so dear to him, that he chose rather to part with Liberty, Livelyhood, and dear Relations, than to shake hands and bid farewell to so endeared a Companion: a Truth for which he had been a Sufferer in former Persecutions, and for adhering to which, he ended his dayes in a kind of Exile, in this present Storm; a Truth that was so revived upon his Heart, and so powerfully prest upon his Conscience, when the Blossoms of the Grave were upon him, and the welcome messengers of Death had summon'd him to his Rest, that he could not Dye till he had Commended it, nay, Commanded it to all that fear the Lord. The subject matter being a Defence of Pure Primitive Worship, needs no

To the Reader.

Patron but he that is our Lord and Law-giver, who stands with his Sword drawn to beat off all Copemates in this his Prerogative, and although *FILII PERDITIONIS* may tug hard to juggle Jesus Christ out of his Throne, and to sit Paramount in the Temple of God, chopping and changing Divine Institutions for Humane Inventions, yet the day is at hand, when the Builder of the Gospel-Temple, shall plead his right with fury poured out : How light soever some *Scepticks, Latitudinarians*, and others, *homines omnium horarum*, may set by Instituted Worship, yet in all Ages of the World, the sincere Servants of God have chosen rather Banishment and Death, than to embrace the Customs of the Heathens, or the Institutes of *Roman Babylon* in their *Divine Service*, as both the Scriptures and Ecclesiastical Writers fully demonstrate. Come we to our late times, even since the Witnesses in the *Marian days*; Where were more Learned, more Godly Men in the World, than *Cartwright, Parker, Reynolds, Greenham, Ames* ? and who knoweth not that these and many more of the same heavenly stamp, suffered extream Persecution, Deprivations and Banishments, rather than they would touch with the *Graven Images, the work of the Craftsmen*, that then were, and now are, the Snares and Nets upon *Misphah* and *Tabor* ? *Holy Cotton, Shepherd*, and many others, eminent for Piety and ability, chose rather to end
their

To the Reader.

their dayes in a howling Wilderness, than to defile themselves with Idols. Learned Cotton answering the greatest Prelate then living, that *Cultus, non Institutus*, was Idolatry. But because some who have been Professors have now their eyes opened, with tasting the Hony of Preferment, Gain and Security, and therefore will not take the Persons before mentioned as competent Witnesses in the Case; I might summon in a Jury of the ablest Conformists in former dayes, to give in their Verdict, for the Ataignment & Condemnation of Invented Worship. In a word, all our Protestant Writers, who contend with the Papists, do use the same Arguments against their numerous Holy-dayes, their Oyl-Crisme, their Holywater, Mass, &c. as we do against Holy-dayes, and other retained Services and Ceremonies : But because I will not keep you too long from the Banquet this Book presents you with, take only a most famous Prophet of their own, the Learned Bishop of Winchester, Dr. Andrews, in his Exposition upon the Second Commandment; his words are these. “ *This Commandment which concerns the manner of Worship, contains a Precept set down by way of Prohibition in these words, NON FACIES TIBI SCULPTILE: The Sanction in these words, EGO ENIM DEUS TULLUS SUM ZELOTYPUS. Shewing how they shall be corrected that will not be directed by this Law.* ”

“ Concerning the Performance of this Worship, two things are commanded, first, God will have *MODUM*

any model or draught of Liturgy, or Prayers whatsoever, would be thus pleasing unto him ; More particularly, whether a Worship, conform to the image of such a Liturgy, as we shall now characterize, or describe (in part) would be in any degree pleasing unto him ; as *viz.* 1. which shall be a rhapsody, medley, or confused heap of a multitude of ingredients, heterogeneous, and of opposite natures,

Mollia cum duris, sine pondere habentia pondus,

Things soft and hard, things weighty, and things light, (as the Poet describes the constitution of the old *Chaos*) no more meet to be moulded together into the same body of an Evangelical Worship, than God under the Law judged an Ox or an Ass to be yoked together for service in the same plough ; as for instance, Canonicals, and *Apocriphals*, the heavenly sayings of *Christ*, and the fabulous reports of *Tobit*, the Psalms of *David*, and the Song of *S. Ambrose*, *Magnificat*, and *Quicumque vult*, passages and expressions, some grave and serious, solid and distinct ; others, ludicrous and light, barbarous, obscure and truthless. 2. Wherein the Prayer-devotion prescribed, is, or shall be, ordered with that strange unsuitableness to the simplicity of the Gospel, that 1. the Lord's Prayer, which was delivered by him with a special intent to prevent buttologies, or vain repetitions in prayer, (*Mat.* 6. 7, 8, 9. compared) is it self enjoined to be repeated, over, and over, and over, (and I know not how often) without any reason given (or easie to be taken) for any one of these repetitions in their respective places : this disposition of it can be resolved into no other reason or cause, but the meer phansy and will of the Contriver, who by it, seems to have been acted by the spirit of this superstition (condemned by *Christ*, *Mat.* 6. 7.) that men shall *be heard for their much speaking*, or for the tale and number of their prayers, only said over and repeated. Besides, this Prayer is ordered to be at the same time audibly pronounced by all the Congregation and Minister together, in some of the said places. Again, 2. the great body of this Prayer-devotion is so ill handled (not to mention the unsound constitution in several veins and parts of it) that it is divided in sunder, and some parts of it severed from others, in several places, by Psalms and Songs, by Chapters, and broken pieces of Chapters (under the false titles of *Epistles* and *Gospels*, whereof they are but small snips or shreds) by *Creeds* or Confessions of Faith thrust in between : and besides, it is in some places, chopped or minced into small pieces or particles, and a distribution of them made, some to the Minister and some to the People, as if the People were to be the mouth of the Minister unto God, as well as he theirs in the publick Assemblies : yea, when Minister and People are

are acting their parts in these strains of Prayer interchangeably assigned unto them, there is such a bandying and tossing of devotions to and again, from one to the other, in a gingling and mymmical manner, that it much resembles the jolly scene of a set of Ale-inspired Companions, chanting their drunken Catches upon a bench. 3. Where this great body of praying-devotion is compounded and made up of many lesser bodies of prayers, the greatest part of which are more intricate and distinct bodies in this kind, than the main body or bulk rather, made up of them all, being closed and sealed up (respectively;) with so many *Amens*. Which is a method, or manner of praying, nowhere recommended unto us in the Scriptures by the Holy Ghost. 4. Where there are appropriate devotions, as Prayers (under the Apocryphal name of *Collects*) Epistles, Gospels, select Chapters, &c. for several dayes (forced by the unjust hand of humane powers; out of that allowance of six dayes in the week, which God himself was pleased to make unto men, to provide themselves by their honest labour of things needful for this present life, and dedicated by men to the honour and service of certain Saints long since dead) and so these days, though but of humane consecration, are here made equal in all points with the Lord's days themselves. 5. Where the Service prescribed and enjoined under the specious pretext of being *Divine*, consisting of short pieces or Sentences of Scriptures, of a Confession of Sins, of an Absolution, of the Lords Prayer, repeated, and repeated, and repeated; and so of the Doxology (so called) in like manner repeated, over, and over, and over; of whole Chapters for Lessons, of broken Chapters for Epistles and Gospels; of pieces of Chapters, as *Magnificat*, *Benedictus*, *Nunc dimittis*, &c. (with the Song of *S. Ambrose*) to separate between Lesson and Lesson (as if there were some danger, or inconvenience at least, if they should come too close together) of the Ten Commandments, with as many *Lord have mercy upon us's*; of a long Letany (so called) of Versicles and Responds, of Collects and Prayers in abundance, some for all men, some for Christs Church *militant* here on Earth, some for Bishops, Pastors and Curates, (as if these were Members of the Church *triumphant*) and some for such other occasions as the Policy and Piety of the Compilers could agree upon) and lastly of a pair of Creeds, the repeating of one of which being required of the whole Congregation, requireth the most ignorant and prophane wretch in it, to profess and say that he believeth as much (if not more) as the most knowing and worthiest *Christian*; yea, and that he believeth that which I believe no man understandeth upon any good grounds what it meaneth, (I mean that *Christ descended into Hell*) the

other imposing upon all men such a Faith as of absolute necessity unto Salvation, which the Scriptures no where require upon such terms, of any man, and which is not found in many sound *Christians*, if in any. Where (I say) the Service enjoyned, consisting of all these Members and Parts now mentioned, must needs be tedious and tiresome unto the People, spending and wasting the best and freshest of their attention, and so indisposing them to attend unto the preaching of the Gospel, and the words by which they must be saved : as if the project and design of it had been to intercept the great Duties of preaching and hearing the Gospel preached, by rendring the wearied Minister less capable of the one, and the wearied People less capable and desirous of the other. Now then, I repeat from afar, and ask, Is it not very considerable (or rather indeed is it worth any consideration at all ?) whether God will be pleased with a Worship presented unto him in the shape and form of such a prodigious Liturgy as that which hath now been described ? unless (haply) men think that a Worship made up of various pieces, and these of different colours, is as honourable, and so as acceptable unto God, as *Jacob* thought a parti-coloured Coat would be unto *Joseph* his Son : Or doth not the Liturgy, the lineaments and feature of which have been presented, as perfectly resemble the Common-Prayer-Book, as *face answereth face in the water* ?

3. It calls for some consideration likewise, whether it be possible (in an ordinary way, or without a piece of a miracle) for a man or a woman, to keep up his heart so much as in a tolerable posture of devotion, reverence, and attention unto such prayers, which having been fram'd by men, and these not of any known excellency above their neighbours, are, in respect of their original, less considerable, and after long familiarity more obnoxious to contempt, especially when he can (well nigh) say them by rote beforehand, and of which he is able to say (with him in the Comedy) *Plus millies jam audivi*, I have heard them more than a thousand times over already. The common saying (verified by experience more than enough) is, *familiarity breeds contempt* and neglect. And God himself judgeth it necessary to consult his Glory, [I mean, a religious awe, reverence, and esteem of his Counsels and Works from men] by concealing the one and the other, until the time of their bringing forth, that so they may come fresh and new unto them. *It is the Glory of God to conceal a thing*, Pro. 25. 2. And speaking of his Works (*Isa.* 48. 7.) *They are created now, and not of old, and even before this thou heardest them not*, (so the former Translation) *lest thou should say, Behold, I knew them*; implying, that men

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(commonly at least) less mind or regard the declaration of such things unto them which they knew before. And upon this account (doubtless) our Saviour speaketh thus (*Mat. 13. 52.*) *Therefore every Scribe [i.e. every Doctor, or Teacher] which is instructed unto [or, for] the Kingdom of Heaven, [i.e. is worthily or meetly qualified for the work of the Ministry of the Gospel, by which the Kingdom of Heaven is promoted in the world] is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.* Now an ability to pray, being as necessary an endowment for a worthy Minister of the Gospel, as a gift of preaching, the Apostles themselves (as it seems; *Act. 6. 4.*) giving it the preheminance in the exercise of their Ministry: that Minister who shall pray little, but only reade a longsome beadroll of Prayers long and short, (if yet they may be called *Prayers*, some of them being termed *Collects*; the greater part or number of them being imbodied, and this body surnamed *Letany*) a work, the performance whereof requires not the best of the abilities of an ordinary Schoolboy of seven years of age, and therefore very improper and uncomely for him to bestow so much time upon, who should be, yea and who pretends to be an Ambassador from Christ unto the World, one of a thousand, &c. such a Minister, I say, that shall perform the praying part of his Ministry at such a despicable rate as this, is not like to draw many into part and fellowship with him in his worship of God; but such who know not that God whom they worship, nor care much either to know him, or how to worship him as they ought. The ignorance, the prophaneness, the wickedness, the licentious and debauched lives of the greatest part of that generation, both men and women, who are the zealous followers of the Common-Prayer-Book Ministry in the Nation, will seal the truth of these sayings fast and sure.

4. Neither is this to be lightly passed over by those that stand in any awe or dread of the jealousy of God, that the *Liturgy* or Common-Prayer we speak of, smells rank of the Popish Mass-Book, being (indeed some slight interpolations, or new furbushings, with some accommodations to secular or civil ends and purposes amongst us, only excepted) little else but the substance, matter, & contents of this Book. This consideration alone is sufficient to render it the abhorring of their souls, that understand any thing (almost) of the nature and dreadful severity of divine jealousy; as that any little spark, not only of right-down or broad-fac'd Idolatry, but of any tiffing dalliance, or wanton compliance with it, will cause it to smoke against those that shall provoke it in this kind. Husbands that are jealous, are not able to bear, not only the gross act of Adultery in their Wives, but not so much as

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any familiarity or correspondence, any light or loose behaviour, with known Adulterers, or persons strongly suspected of that Wickedness. Under the Law God strictly prohibited such things unto his People, which were in themselves lawful enough, (though not necessary) because they were observed by their idolatrous Neighbours. See, read, consider and compare at leisure, *Levit.* 19. 27, 28. & 21. 5, 6. *Deut.* 14. 1, 2. with *Isa.* 15. 2. *Jer.* 48. 37. & 9. 26. & 25. 23. & 49. 32. (according to the import of the Original, noted in the margent of your larger Bibles, at these three last Texts) and *Deut.* 12. 30. they are charged by him not to ask or enquire, *How did these Nations [being idolatrous] serve their gods, that I may do so likewise?* And in the New Testament, Christ insisteth upon the practice of the Gentiles, as an argument to dissuade his Disciples from taking thought for outward things, *For after all these things do the Gentiles seek, &c.* *Mat.* 6. 32. Besides, for Saints to borrow of a superstitious, wicked and idolatrous Generation, Enemies unto God, and to all that truly love and fear him, a Model or Platform of Worship to be presented unto him, by which they have (in conjunction with other unhallowed Artifices) supported, nourished, and kept up an Antichristian Interest for a long time in the World; when as they [the Saints] have the manifold Wisdom of God before them in the Scriptures, and may have his Spirit also for the asking, to direct and teach them how to worship and serve him acceptably, from time to time, must needs, in the eye of Reason it self, be spiritually unnatural, and most unbecoming those who pretend to the high honour and dignity of being Children of Light. The Apostle *Paul* pleads this twice together, by way of bar to the eating of things offered unto Idols, by Christians; *The Earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof,* 1 *Cor.* 10. 26, 28. The connexion of this reason, with that which he desires to perswade unto by it, is this, It is most unworthy the Sons and Daughters of God, to defile themselves with eating the Devils meat, [that which hath been sacrificed and given unto him] whereof he hath no great plenty neither, whenas their Father is Lord and Owner of a world of Provisions clean and wholesome, wherewith they have no cause to fear or doubt but that he will sufficiently supply them. And of those who did or should presume to eat of the Devils portion, he demandeth argumentatively, and with great earnestness and vehemency of spirit, thus: *Do we provoke the Lord unto Jealousie?* [that is, to the fiercest of his displeasure against us] *Are we stronger than he?* [meaning otherwise that we are not like to escape the severity of his anger, if we continue so to provoke him] 1 *Cor.* 10. 22. Is it not altogether as ill consistent with the Wisdom, Honour, and Peace of Believers in these days

days to be found of that Worship which hath been devised, contrived, formed and fashioned (no man knows by what Rule, nor by whose Directions) by men justly given up by God unto strong delusions, and to believe to *Jesus*, that *Lie* of Lies, *2Thes. 2. 11.* and to walk in *abominable Idolatries* (as *Peter* speaketh) whenas God, in and by the Scriptures, and supplies of his Spirit, hath vouchsafed unto them means and opportunities in abundance to enable themselves to worship him with a Worship pure and clean, no ways charged or encumbered with any suspicion or jealousy of Satans interposure with the least of his Fingers in the moulding and framing of it.

That which is commonly pretended to hide the baseness of the Parentage or Original of the *Liturgy* impleaded, is but a veil that is transparent, and easily seen thorow, by those that are willing to examine it, and look a little narrowly into it. For the Martyrs, and other pious and learned men, in whose weakness the importune Commenders and Obtruders of this Liturgy (our apocryphal Lord Bishops, with those that are younger Brethren in the same iniquity with them) do so much glory for advantage sake, as if they were the Fathers or Compilers of it; the truth is, they were neither so, nor so, unless in a diminutive sense onely, and that which is not much considerable for their purpose. And if they had been as desirous to honour those Martyrs and pious men they speak of, as they are to exalt themselves, they should, with the good Sons of *Noah*, have cast some covering over their nakedness, and not publish it upon all occasions, as now they do, unto the world; with an intent to cover, or rather to justify their own by it. Some, afterwards Martyrs, and other good men, were (indeed) the Authors of our *English* Liturgy, as such, (I mean as *English*) and (haply) as wanting many strains of that gross Superstition, Error and Idolatry which are found in the Latin *Mass-Book*; and likewise as having some few things of lesser moment added and inserted by way of accommodation to the Civil State; the *Romish* yoke, as well in Civil as Ecclesiastick affairs, having been newly cast off by it. Nor do I doubt but that much may be pleaded, and this very Christianly, for the justification of those worthy and good men, in respect of the uprightness of their hearts, the honesty and sincerity of their intentions in the Work; who by a little refining of the said Popish Devotions, and by altering the property of the Language wherein they were written, thought they might make them commodious enough for *English* Protestants: yea, and (probably) they might suppose that when they brought the Service of God (such as it was, and they it seems esteemed it such as by a little purgation might be cleansed from all the noysom dregs of Popery, and

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so become lawful) out of an unknown Tongue, into a Language which the People understood, they had (in a good sence) brought *light out of darkness*, and so might be well apaid in their Consciences with their Work. But though it be granted that they were persons of eminent worth, both for their Piety and Learning, yet (questionless) they were no Prophets ; or else the spirit of Prophecy failed them, in reference to the event and consequence of their Common-Prayer-Book Achievement. For had they so much as once dreamed that this Book would prove such a Root of Bitterness unto the Nation, as it is too well known it hath been ; that it would create those sad distempers, those divisions, distractions, tumults, and confusions, whereby both sin and sorrow have been abundantly encreased amongst the inhabitants of the Land ; or that it would be an Engine in the hands of men of unmerciful & high-imposing Spirits, wherewith to rack the Consciences, and wreck the Comforts, Liberties, Estates, &c. of many thousands of the Saints and dear Children of God in the Nation, being at this day employed, and like to be employed in these bloody executions, (unless the Righteousness of God will please to restrain the remainder of the wrath of men.) Had (I say) the good men we speak of, but once dreamed of those prodigies of mischief whereunto our unhappy Service-Book hath been highly accessary, we may be groundedly confident that they would never have found either heart or hand to lift up toward the promoting of it. But in them is fulfilled the latter part of this old Distich :

πολλάκι τοὶ δοκέων βῆναι κακὸν, ἐσθλὸν ἔθηκεν :
Καὶ τε δοκῶν ἀγαθὸν θῆται, ἔθηκε κακόν.

*Good Fruit on bad Intendments sometime grows ;
And from good meanings sometimes Evil flows.*

5. (And lastly upon the present account) It is not unworthy his consideration whose heart is firmly set within him to please God in worshipping him, that the Liturgy or Prayer-Book, into which we are yet enquiring, is like unto a Net, which seldom encloseth any good Fish, but multitudes and great sholes of those that are bad. It is sufficiently known that the great body or bulk of those that go wondering after it, and can savour no other kind or manner of Worship (at least none comparatively) but that which the tradition of this Book teacheth them, are (more generally) men and women of one or more of these sad characters, ignorant, prophane, superstitious, time-servers, fearful, unbelieving, haters of those that are good, Drunkards, Adulterers, Extortioners,

tortioners, Covetous, &c. And though the proportion of *one of a City, and two of a Tribe*, of persons of Conscience, and truly fearing God, at whose Judgements and Consciences the Convictions of the Unlawfulness of that Worship are not yet arrived, may be found in that Crowd; yet it is hardly credible that such as these should at any time partake in it with any great contentment, or good apayment of Soul. Persons of crazy and ill-aboding Consciences, especially, if they be as well outwardly as inwardly obnoxious, are therefore (in all likelihood) so impotently devoted to the Book and Prayers we speak of, because these take pity on them, and intreat them gently; according to the common saying, *Missa non mordet*, THE MASS BITES NOT: It is not like unto the Spirit of God in the mouth of his able, faithful and zealous Ministers, of a searching, expostulating, convincing, sharply-reproving nature; the sound of it is not like that of Thunder, to awaken or terrifie men, but as the noise which a soft and gentle stream makes among Pebble Stones, which disposeth unto sleep.

Now amongst many Arguments which war strongly against the said Book, and Worship dictated therein, this (methinks) should do thorow execution upon the Judgements and Consciences of those that are spiritually-minded, and make treasure of the Love of God, *viz.* That they that are so zealously addicted unto them, even to the hatred and persecution of those that in the use of them cannot say *Amen* with them, are more generally, if not universally, persons much estranged from the life of God, and affectionate lovers of this present world. For it is no light presumption of the Carnality of a Worship, and that it is such as pleaseth not God, when it so pleaseth his Enemies, (for such are all those that live not in subjection to his Laws, *Luk. 19. 27. Rom. 8. 7.*) and withal, is of an uncouth and horrid taste unto those that *love him and keep his Commandments*. It is a sign of the voice of a stranger, and not of Christ, when the Sheep of Christ do not hear it, but flee from it, *John 10. 4, 5, 27.* And the reasoning of this Apostle (*1 Joh. 4. 5.*) about matter of Doctrine, is as demonstrative in the case of Worship now before us: *They are of the World* [i. e. Teachers of whom I admonish you that you take heed, are of the same *genius* with the generality of men in the world, who love Ease, Pleasure Riches, Honour, &c.] *therefore speak they of the World*, or ἐκ τῆς Κόσμου, out of, or from the world; [that is, they enquire and observe how matters go in the world, that so they may know how to promote their worldly Interest, and accordingly they frame their Doctrines and Teachings:] *And the World heareth them*; [that is, persons worldly-minded fall in readily and greedily with them, their Doctrine so well suiting their Principles,

ciples, Dispositions and Desires.] So when a Form or Method of Worship (for there is the same reason of Worship and Doctrine, as to the consideration in hand, as was lately hinted) shall generally court and comport with the Humours, Fancies, and Consciences (such as they are) of loose, ignorant, superstitious and earthly-minded-men, it is an argument concluding above all peradventure, that the complexion, frame and constitution of it answereth the *genius*, temper, and spirit of these men, much like as (in *Solomon's* resemblance) *face answereth to face in the water*. That manner or kind of Worship which God seeketh and delighteth in, is not like to relish with the corrupt taste of sensual and carnal men, any whit better then *Paul's* preaching did ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις, *amongst those that were lost*, [or rather *perishing*, that is, in imminent danger of being lost] to whom it was *the savour of death unto death*, (2 Cor. 2. 16.) that is, it filled their Consciences ever and anon with strong resentments of the wrath of God coming out against them like an armed man, to destroy them for their sins. It is recorded of *Antisthenes*, that when the unworthy multitude, contrary to their wonted manner of dealing by vertuous and worthy men, commended him, he expressed himself in this question, τί γὰρ κακὸν ἐποίησα; *Alas, what evil have I done?* If the Common-Prayer-Book did no evil, we may very reasonably judge, that the great host of the present Proselytes and Admirers of it, would leave it as solitary as a Beacon on an hill. And it was the right saying of another, *Recti argumentum est, pessimis displicere*; it is no light argument of the goodness whether of a person or thing, when those that are very bad are displeased with either. *Nero's* hatred of the Gospel, was by ancient Christians construed as a testimony of the excellency and worth of it. Certainly the right and approved Worship, or way of worshiping God, will never make glad the hearts of such a Generation of men as now rejoyce in, and glory over the Book of Common-Prayer. But

2. Though these general considerations relating onely to the matter and form, or substance of this Book (unto which many others of a more particular import, and drawn from the unmeet expressions and passages in it, which are very numerous, might be added upon the same account) are too considerable and weighty to be easily removed off the Judgements and Consciences of serious and considering-men; yet the little finger of the imposition of it, and of the Worship (so called) directed and held forth in it, is by many degrees heavier then the loyns of a thousand such considerations, and of a more tremendous aspect in the eye of every Conscience that is enlightened, duely and clearly to apprehend the nature and consequence of it. For suppose

pose the property of the Book should be so far altered, that whereas it is now like the politick Body of the Jewish State in *Isaiah's* days ; *The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint : from the soles of the feet even unto the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores* (*Isa. 1. 5, 6.*) Suppose (*I say*) it should be so far altered from the present deformity and deplorable condition of it, as to become as praise-worthy for Beauty as *Absalom*, of whom it is said, that *from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him*, (*2 Sam. 14. 25.*) and that a general Council of Elect Angels should assemble to reform and amend it, and should make all the crooked things in it straight, and all the rough things in it smooth, yet would not this Angelical purity and perfection of it, (wherein its Admirers might in this case safely glory) justify either the Imposition of it from imperious Blasphemy, or the use of it in worshipping God, as, or because imposed, from base and wretched Idolatry.

This is demonstrable from this clear and pregnant ground, attested both by the Scriptures, and by the Light of Nature, or sound Principles of Reason, consonant to the Scriptures : *It is as well or as much the incommunicable Privilege or Prerogative of God, to prescribe, appoint, and command his own Worship, as to be worshipped ;* [I mean as to be worshipped in his *Divine or God-like Capacity.*] This being a Truth, (as we shall presently, God assisting, evince it to be) it undeniably, by a near-hand consequence, and whereof every man is or soon may be capable, followeth :

1. That he that shall authoritatively, under any penalty to be inflicted on those that shall not obey, command any Form, Model, Method or manner of Divine Worship, to be observed by men, maketh himself God, or equal unto God, obtrudeth himself as God; or in Gods stead upon men, claiming, assuming, and usurping such a power, which is a branch of the appropriate and incommunicable prerogative of God. Even as he that claimeth and exerciseth *Regalia*, such Power and Authority, which are the appropriate Rights of Kings, maketh himself a King, and saith (in effect, and in a more significant expression than the plainest words that way would amount unto) *I am a King.* In like manner whoever acteth or exerciseth any of those Divine Rights, Authorities, or Powers, which are inseparably annexed to the Throne of Heaven, and so declared and asserted by him that sitteth thereon ; though in words he should deny it, yet in deeds, which speak loudest, he professeth and saith, *I am God.* It is like that they who stumble at this stone, may think they walk inoffensively in their way ; and (probably) intend no such thing as an arrogation of Divinity unto

themselves in what they do : But this is common to the greatest Offenders of all, not to intend the formality, but onely the matter of their wicked actions ; to intend onely the Text, not the interpretation of their sins : The grossest Idolater that is, doth not intend to commit the sin of Idolatry ; but he intends the doing of that, which being truly interpreted, is the committing of the sin of Idolatry. There is the like consideration of the Blasphemer, of the Persecutor of the Saints, and of many other most enormous Transgressors : And thus it is like to be with those who count it a goodly thing to say with the King of *Babel* of old, *We will ascend above the heights of the Clouds, WE WILL BE LIKE UNTO THE MOST HIGH*, (Isa. 14. 14.) We will give Laws to the Judgements and Consciences of Men, as well as He : It is like (I say) that though they speak thus in their actions, yet they do not intend to make themselves Corrivals in Authority and Power with God, or to supersede and make void his Laws concerning his Worship, with devotional Laws and Statutes of their own. From the said ground it clearly also followeth :

2. That whosoever shall accept of, submit unto, or worship God with, any such Worship, or form of Worship, which is prescribed, imposed, and commanded by men (especially if he shall submit unto it, as, or because thus commanded) committeth spiritual whordom, and bringeth the heavy guilt of the sin of Idolatry upon his soul (besides the strengthening the hand of the imposer in a very sinful way) The reason hereof, upon the former ground, is plain : namely, because he exhibiteth that honour, reverence, and homage unto a creature, which are due unto God alone, and (as it were) turns creature unto him that is no God, unless a God may be made of dust and ashes. For if it be the Prerogative of God to appoint and command his own worship, they who approve and justifie men assuming and exercising this Prerogative, entertain the creature with divine reverence and honour, saying (constructively, and in effect) unto it, Thou art God, or, I acknowledge and own thee for my God. Persons of this Character are all those, who practise the Worship commanded by men, upon the account, or because of their command ; whether they do it willingly, I mean, before, or without any outward violence, or compulsion ; or whether they do it upon sufferings, or through fear of suffering ; though the sin seems to be much greater in the former case. *Ephraim is oppressed, and broken in Judgment, because he WILLINGLY* [that is, readily, and with forwardness of compliance, without asking any question for conscience sake] *walked after the commandment* [meaning after the idolatrous commandment of their King *Jeroboam*, seconded and

and enforced by all his successors.] *Hof. 5. 9.* He that liveth under the Authority and Government of a lawful King over him, and shall subject himself unto the commands of another, commanding him as his King, or such things, which his King only hath, by the Laws, a right of Authority and Power to command him, renounceth his Allegiance unto his own Prince, and becomes a Traitor to his Crown and Dignity.

3. From the ground aforesaid, it followeth yet further, that such persons who do obey the Commands of their Princes, or other Magistrates, wherein they enjoyn them any form, method, or manner of divine Worship, are in such their obedience, their greatest enemies, thereby exposing them to the stroke of the jealousy, and high displeasure of God. The reason of this consequence is, because to make an Idol of any creature, or to set up any, whether thing or person, in competition with God, and to ascribe divine honour unto it, rendreth it the object of his severe wrath and jealousy. The Scripture is abundantly pregnant with testimony of this truth, as well in the case of persons as of things. The People ascribing divine honour unto *Herod*, in giving a shout in applause of his Oration, *The voice of God and not of man*, brought suddain destruction upon him, and this in a most loathsome and grievous manner : *And immediately* (saith the text) *the Angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory* [whereby he might indeed have prevented the judgment] *and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost*, *Acts 12. 22, 23.* So dangerous a thing it is for Princes, and Great men to accept of divine honour, when it is cast upon them : how much more when they shall themselves compel men by threatening Laws and Edicts, to ascribe it unto them (as all they do, who by severe mulcts and penalties constrain men to worship God, not as he pleaseth, or commandeth, but as they please themselves.) It was not simply *Jeroboams* Idolatry, nor yet his Edict or Command unto the People, to worship his Idol-Calves, but it was the compliance of his People with this Command, that occasioned his ruine, and the rooting out of his House and Posterity (as it did likewise occasion the like misery to all his Successors ; yea, and the utter ruine of his whole State and Kingdom in a short time) This is clear from the express tenor of the context, *1 King. 12. 30.* compared with *vers. 34.* of the following Chapter. In the former place we read thus : *And this thing* [namely, *Jeroboam's* setting up his two Calves, *vers. 28, 29.*] *became a sin ; or, turned to sin* (as our former translation had it) meaning, that in time, and this not very long neither, it *became sin to the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth.*

earth. It was a sin simply, yea, a very great sin, as soon as it was acted: that is, the setting up of the Calves, and the pressing of the People to worship them, was a great sin in *Jeroboam*, whatsoever the consequence of it had been, or whether the People had worshipped them or no, or though, himself repenting of it, it had not been his ruine. But it did not *B E C O M E* a sin of that sad consequence, as to be destructive to *Jeroboam* and his house, but by means of the Peoples compliance with him in it, as is manifest from the former place, where this (in the latter part of the verse) is rendred as a reason, or an account, why and how *Jeroboam*s act in setting up the Calves, and causing the People to worship them, *became* a sin of that heavy consequence unto him, *viz.* that the People (generally) approved and practised that worship: *And this became a sin: for the People went to worship, before the one, even unto Dan, or, as far as Dan;* [implying it seems, that the King himself, and his Nobles, and Attendants, worshipped before the other, which was set up in *Bethel*, the Kings Court or Chappel being here, *Amos 7. 13.* Or else it may import the great zeal and forwardness of the People in comporting with their King in his Idolatrous Worship, and that even those of them that dwelt in *Bethel*, and in places near to it, would needs travel as far as *Dan*, which was at the furthest distance from *Bethel* the Land would afford, to worship before the Calf set up there, that in *Bethel* not being prepared and fitted for such Devotion till some while after, as may be gathered from vers. 32, 33.] From which passages compared, it plainly appears that had not the People obeyed him in his idolatrous device, it might have been a lengthning out of his Tranquillity, and his Posterity after him might have sat upon his Throne: Yea, and (probably) it might through the Blessing of God, have proved a means or occasion of his Repentance. It is not unlike but that *Jeroboam*s Priests, made of the basest of the People, having once tasted of the Kings Favour and bountiful Allowance settled upon their Priesthood, strengthened his hand all they could, in his Idolatrous Worship, bewitching him with this, or some such lying and dangerous notion as this; *No Calves, no King;* (even as those who are known by the Name of Bishops, but not by the properties or works of Bishops indeed, being advanced unto large Revenues and much worldly Pomp and Power by Christian Kings, are very solicitous and careful to nourish this preposterous and importune conceit in them upon all occasions, *No Bishop, no King*) But as unto *Jeroboam*, *Calves and no King*, had been the more prudential and safe Maxime of State; not the want or pulling down of his Calves, but the setting of them up, being the true and real cause (as we lately heard from the Records of
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the holy Ghost himself) why after a short time he was *no King*, nor any of his house long after him: So is it more then conjecture, that BISHOPS, AND NO KING, would make the far better Article in the Politick Creed of Christian Kings, and more worthy to be believed than the contrary, *No Bishop, no King*. But this by the way. It hath been shewed from the Scriptures, that to idolize a Person, or to ascribe Divine Honour unto any man, either directly (as the People did unto *Herod*) or indirectly, (as the Ten Tribes did unto *Jeroboam* their King, in accepting that way of worshipping God, which he prescribed unto them) is to awaken the eye of Divine Jealousie upon him, unless he refuseth or disclaimeth it when it is tender'd unto him: which though Angels and holy Men have always done, yet it hath not been the wisdom or manner of Kings and Great Men in the World so to do. *Jacob* (we know) loved his Wife *Rachel* very tenderly and affectionately; yet when she required of him that which was proper onely unto God to give, and so reflected Divine Honour upon him, [*Give me Children or else I die*] he being (as it seems) suddenly struck with the apprehension of the danger which such a saying might expose him unto, reproveth her sharply for her inconsiderateness therein; but withal, amandeth and dispatcheth away that Divine Honour which was put upon him, unto him who was the right owner of it: *Am I (saith he) in Gods stead?* &c. *Gen. 30. 1, 2.*

And as they who comply with Kings and Rulers in their Commands concerning Forms of Worship of humane device, are in such their compliance great Enemies unto them; so on the other hand, they who chuse rather to abide the bitterest blast of their displeasure, then to please them with conforming themselves to their wills and pleasures in such cases, are in this detraction of their Obedience unto them, their real Friends. Thus *Daniel*, notwithstanding his refusal to obey the Decree of King *Darius*, being unlawful, said unto him, *Also unto thee, (or against thee) O King have I done no hurt*, *Dan. 6. 22.* In which words he seems as well to imply that they who had obeyed him in that his Decree, had been unfaithful unto him, had cast a snare upon him, and done him harm; as to assert his own integrity and goodness of heart towards him: And that the holy man was so far from doing any hurt to the King by changing his Command, that he did him much good by it, appears by the sequel of the Chapter, where we find him, by means hereof, enlightned with the knowledge of the true God, and giving a full testimony to his excellent Greatness and Power, and recommending his Worship and Service unto all his Dominions, *vers. 26, 27.* Of like happy consequence unto King *Nebuchadnezzar*, was the like..

like disobedience of those three faithful Servants of God and the King, *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*, in refusing to submit to his Command about the worshipping of his Golden Image, *Dan. 3. 28, 29.*

Again, That other Creatures, whether animate or inanimate, by being contrived or converted into Idols, or vested with any honour appropriate unto God, are hereby prepared for the swifter destruction, by reason of the Jealousie of God, the Scriptures testifie yet more abundantly. Notwithstanding I shall not insist upon this at present, but mention one place onely, and point at others: *And the strong shall be as tow*, [that is, the Idols, though made of never so strong and durable materials, as Iron, Brass, Stone, Silver, Gold, &c. or rather *the Strong*, that is, the Idols in which you put your confidence, supposing them to be strong and able to protect you against all dangers, shall be as the most light and combustible matter, not able to make the least resistance against the fire, when it is put to it] *and the Maker of it as a spark*, [that is, they that made them Idols, by this very contrivance of them, shall be the means or occasion of their breaking to pieces, their defacement, or stamping to powder: even as they that make Idols of men, as was lately shewed, do hereby occasion, and hasten their ruine] *and they shall both burn together*, [Idol, and Idol-maker, shall be destroyed together, *i. e.* as well one, as the other] *and none shall quench them*: [that is, they shall certainly perish, what means soever shall be made to preserve, the one or the other] *Isa. 1. 31.* See more of this Truth, *2 King. 18. 4. Exod. 32. 20. 2 King. 23. 4, 5, 6, &c. 2 Chron. 15. 16. Jer. 10. 11. Isa. 2. 18. Jer. 50. 2. Ezek. 6. 4, 6, 8, 11, 12. 30. 13.* with others.

4. From the aforesaid Principle or Ground it followeth likewise, That in case the greatest and most lawful Authority amongst men, should under any civil penalty, or otherwise, impose upon those under them, that very Worship, manner, or kind of Worship, which God himself, either in his Word, or by the Law or Light of Nature, hath imposed on them; although this imposition of it by men doth not render it unlawful, nor yet dissolve the necessity of performing it, which the Law of God imposeth on them: yet, if waving the Commandment of God in the case, they shall perform it meerly upon, and out of respect of the Commandment of men; and upon such terms that they would not practise or perform it, did not their Superiours on Earth command it: such a performance as this, even of the purest Worship that is, otherwise, would be idolatrous and unlawful: although this Worship, considered in it self, or (in the School-expression) *in actu signato*, would still be the pure and true Worship of God. The reason of this consequence from the premises is, because if it be the Prerogative or proper Right.

Right of God to command his own Worship, they who shall reject or disown him in the claim hereof, and entertain or submit unto any Creature claiming it, is like a Woman that admitteth a stranger into her husbands Bed, shutting him out of his own doors.

5. (And lastly, for matter of consequence) This conclusion also springeth naturally from the same root with the former: That not to accept or submit unto any Form or Model of Divine Worship, which hath been contrived and fram'd by men, can be no disobedience to any Law, truly so called, in any politick State, Kingdom, or Commonwealth whatsoever. The reason of this consequence is pregnant and clear; namely, Because there is, there can be no Law, truly and really such (I mean which hath the nature, essence, and binding force of a Law indeed) that requireth any thing of men, which is made or declared sinful or unlawful by a superiour Law. Any Act, Sanction, Decree, Law, Statute or Constitution, which enjoyneth or imposeth any thing contrary either to the Law or Mind of God in the Scriptures, or to the Law of Nature, or Light of Reason, by what Authority soever it be enacted, becomes void and null as soon as made, being like unto a Child that is still born. Nor is this any ways repugnant to the Law of this Nation; the effect and substance of the notion being (as I understand) the acknowledged sence of some of the greatest Lawyers themselves, and will not (I presume) be denied by any that understand themselves like men in their Profession. Yea, the *Grand Debater* himself (though a man of as high an imposing-spirit as Episcopal Zeal can lightly make him) acknowledgeth as much, in saying, *'Tis true, a Superiour cannot command a thing unlawful*; *Grand Debate, pag. 62.* His meaning can be no other, but that when he doth command any such thing, his Command is null, and not obliging: However, that Case is plain enough. Certain it is, that all Authority and Right of Power, is Originally vested in God himself; and consequently, that whatever Authority is seated in any Creature, one or more, they have it by derivation and gift from him, according to the Apostles Doctrine, *Rom. 13. 1.* Again, As certain it is, that God giveth no Authority or Right of Power unto any man, or numbers of men whatsoever, against himself. Therefore no Act or Law (so called) whatsoever, that is made with repugnancy to his Interest of Authority, or Sovereignty of commanding, hath the nature or force of a Law; the Makers of it, whoever they be, having received no Authority from God to make any such: but on the contrary, stand charged by his Law to forbear all acting and Law-making in that kind; yea, and lie under a severe threatening from him, in case they transgress: *Wo unto them that decree un-*

righteous Decrees, &c. Isa. 10. 1. And as by the Laws of this Land, *Nullum tempus occurrit Regi*, There is no prescription of Time against the King: so by the Law of Nature and common Reason, *Nulla authoritas occurrit Regum Regi*, No authority whatsoever, is of force against the King of Kings. And as in the order and subordination of Civil Authorities, the Command of an inferiour Magistrate doth not bind against the Command of the Superiour, (supposing this to be lawful;) the Warrant or Command of a Country Justice of Peace, is not to be obeyed (under the *Proviso* mentioned) against the Order or Command of a Judge; nor the Command of a Judge, against the lawful Command of the King. How much less doth the Authority of a weak and sinful Creature, though the Name of it might be *Legion*, and they never so many, oblige any person against the least ἰσχύς, or tittle of any the Commands or Laws of God, these being all unquestionably righteous and just? And as the Scripture teacheth us to resolve the case without any demur or consideration at all, between God and men, when they speak contradictingly the one unto the other, so that the one must needs speak truth, the other that which is false; *Let God be true, and every man* [whatsoever his interest or repute for truth be with men] *a liar* (Rom. 3. 4.) So when there is any inconsistency or contest between any of the Laws of God, and the Laws of men, the case is soon decided as concerning the equity or binding force of either; Let the Law of God be *just, and holy, and good*, and even upon this account also, challenge (with authority) obedience from men; but the Law of men unjust, unholy, and evil, and so a nullity, and of no authority at all to require subjection to it. Thus *Peter* (with other Apostles) in the presence of the high Priest, and a great Council with him, was very positive and definitive in the case, *We ought rather to obey God, than men*, Act. 5. 29. not long before being, with *John*, brought as guilty persons before another full Council, he judged the equity of the case so notorious and broad on Gods side, that he feared not to make the Council it self his Arbitrators, although they were Parties, and his Adversaries; *Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you* [or, to obey you, according to the former translation] *more* [or, rather, μᾶλλον] *than God, judge ye?* Act. 4. 19. So those three Servants of God (lately mentioned) being commanded by King *Nebuchadnezzar* to worship the Golden Image which he had set up, and in case of refusal terribly threatned to be presently cast into the midst of a fiery Furnace, declared unto him, *That they were not careful to answer him in the matter*, (Dan. 3. 16.) the contrariety between the Kings Command, and the Command of God, was so manifest, that they required no time to con-

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sider of an answer, or what to do in the case, but immediately resolved to keep fast and close to the Command of God, though in so doing they must and did disobey the Commandment of the King. Therefore if it be the Prerogative of God to appoint and command his own Worship; that Law, or humane Constitution, which attempteth to divest him of it, and to communicate it unto any Creature, one, or more, or never so many, is indeed no Law, but an Usurper of the name and title of a Law, wanting the Spirit, Life, and Soul of a Law, which stand in an equitable force to bind to the observation of it. But no equity bindeth any man to give away the glory of God to another: So then, not to submit to any form of Divine Worship, devised and imposed by men, is to do the will of God, and consequently not to transgress or disobey any Law of man.

Now for the demonstration and proof of that Assertion, or Ground, (formerly mentioned) out of which the five Conclusions lately argued, grow as naturally, as so many Boughs or Arms of a Tree out of the Trunk or Body of it: Let us; first, hear, weigh, and consider diligently and impartially, whether the Scriptures do not speak to the heart of it, and whether God himself doth not here claim such a Prerogative as therein is asserted unto him. Secondly, We shall consult some of the Maximes of Nature, and Principles of Reason, about the truth of it.

For the first. I intend not to insist upon all places which offer themselves willingly enough to serve in the present warfare: this would carry us far beyond the bounds of our intended brevity; but shall argue only some few of those which speak more plainly to our purpose.

First, Where God reproveth, rejecteth, or condemneth any Worship, Form, or manner of Worship, upon this account, That *He commanded it not*; especially when there are other things in it, one or more, very hateful and highly reproveable, he plainly declareth and asserteth it as his Prerogative, to appoint and command all Worship: Else why should he make this the emphatical character of such a Worship which his Soul abhorreth, *That He commanded it not*? especially when this Worship is (as was now said) otherwise, and in it self, abominable? If men had any authority to appoint, or command a Worship, this were no reasonable or just exception against any Worship whatsoever, *That God commanded it not*: but if it be justly reproveable, it must be for some intrinsecal evil either in the matter, or in the form of it, or in both. But passages of the import now specified, the Scripture affordeth many: *And they have built the high Places of Tophet, which is*

in the Valley of the sons of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, WHICH I COMMANDED THEM NOT, Jer. 7.

31. So again, *They have built also the high-places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire unto Baal, WHICH I COMMANDED NOT, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind*; Jer. 19. 5. In both these places it is observable, that though the man-devised worship mentioned, was in it self abominable, full of unnatural and barbarous cruelty, and besides, performed to the honour of a most filthy and abominable Idol; yet God in reproving it, taketh no notice of either of these abominations, but insists only upon this, that *HE COMMANDED IT NOT*, as being the greatest abomination of all, and which (comparatively) justified all the rest. Again; *And they built the high-places of Baal, —WHICH I COMMANDED THEM NOT, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination*. Jer. 32.

35. By comparing this expression (in all these passages) *WHICH I COMMANDED THEM NOT*, with the express Command of God (Lev. 18. 21.) *Thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass thorow the fire unto Molech*, it plainly appears, that in the case of Worship, for God not to command and expressly to forbid, are of one and the same consideration: Even as in a Conveyance of Lands, whatsoever is not expressed, is no more conveyed than what is excepted. Yea, and it is very observable from the said passages, that God intending to put the sharpest accent upon the breach of his Law in the matter of Worship (which doubtless he doth intend in reproving and condemning it) He doth not place it in matter of simple disobedience unto such his Law (this being found in every sin, I mean, disobedience unto his Law, 1 Job. 3. 4.) but rather in the presumption of men to attempt any thing in that kind, without, besides, or beyond his Command.

Several other passages there are, besides those mentioned, of like character with them. *If there be found among you ——— man or woman that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the Lord thy God, in transgressing his Covenant, and hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the Sun, or Moon, or any of the Host of Heaven, which I HAVE NOT COMMANDED &c.* Deut. 17. 2, 3. *Thy People which thou broughtest out of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: they are quickly turned aside out of the way, WHICH I COMMANDED THEM, &c.* (Deut. 9. 12.) implying, that in the Worship of God (of which he here speaketh) *to turn aside out of the way WHICH HE HATH COMMANDED*, is to corrupt a man's self [that is, to dispose, or prepare himself for ruine and destruction] unto what way soever he shall betake himself otherwise. *And Nadab and Abihu, the sons*

sons of Aaron, took either of them his Censer, and put fire therein, and put Incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, WHICH HE COMMANDED THEM NOT. And there went out Fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they dyed before the Lord. Lev. 10. 1, 2.

In this high-provoking act of the Sons of *Aaron*, for which the severe jealousy of God brake out immediatly upon them in a consuming fire, there was no disobedience to any Command, (I mean, unto any particular or expresse Command) of God: he had no where forbid them (at least, explicitly or directly) to offer ordinary or common fire (which is termed *strange fire*, because the Commandment of God knew it not) in their Priestly Ministrations: nor is any disobedience in this kind charged on them by the holy Ghost, nor so much as mentioned as any cause of that terrible execution, which was suddenly done by the immediate hand of God himself upon them: their only crime and guilt was, that *they offered strange fire before the Lord, WHICH HE COMMANDED THEM NOT*: they presumed to worship God otherwise than he had appointed, or commanded. The sin of *Uzzah* in putting forth his hand to stay the Ark (for which he likewise suffered the same measure from the provoked jealousy of God, being by him struck dead in the place) was of like nature and consideration. For neither did he therein transgress any expresse Command of God: for he had no where commanded that none but the *Levites* should touch or meddle with the Ark: only he had commanded that the *Levites* should wait upon the Tabernacle with what appertained to it. So that the provocation in his sin also, only was his intermeddling with the holy things of God relating to his Worship, without his Command. And thus *David*, upon the ground that we maintain (namely that all Worship uncommanded, or unappointed by God, is unlawful and displeasing unto him; or, which is the same, that his order and appointment are requisite to legitimate any Worship or holy Service) proved it to have been unlawful for any other to carry the Ark of God, but the *Levites* only. *None* (saith he, 1 Chron. 15. 2.) *ought to carry the Ark of God, but the Levites: for them hath the Lord chosen to carry the Ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever.* It was unlawful for all other persons, the *Levites* excepted, to carry the Ark of God; not because he had prohibited them by the letter, or direct import, of any Law, to carry it, but because he had not *chosen*, or appointed them, as he had the *Levites*. Again,

Secondly, Of the same, or like import, with the texts already cited, are all those also, in which God stigmatizeth the Worship which men performed unto him, with this character of his hatred, that it was of
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their own chusing, or devising, after the imagination of their own heart, &c. In all such places as these (which are not a few) he asserteth unto himself the appointment of his own Worship, as belonging, prerogative-wise, unto himself, and wherein he will not indure any creature to have part and fellowship with him. For otherwise (as we reasoned before) no Worship were reprovably simply upon this score, that it is of mens own chusing or devising. We shall not stand to argue any of these places, as we did most of the other: the inference or result now mentioned from the general tenour of them all, is pregnant and convincing enough. And if it be an hateful brand upon any form of Worship to be of humane extraction, or to call any man, or any numbers of men, Father; how much more hateful and provoking in the sight of God must it needs be, to attempt to bind any such spurious and base worship upon the generous and heaven-born consciences of the sons and daughters of God (or, indeed, upon the consciences of any men) with the hard cords of Imprisonments, Confiscations, Banishments, or what other Cruelties *Satan* shall please to suggest unto men for the promoting of his worship and service in the world, under the delusive pretence of the Worship and Service of God? But places of the late mentioned character, are these (with their fellows) *And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the Commandments of the Lord, and do them: and that ye seek not AFTER YOUR OWN HEART, AND YOUR OWN EYES, after which ye use to go a whoring; Numb. 15. 39. Take heed unto your selves that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other Gods, and worship them, and then the Lords Wrath be kindled against you, &c. Deut. 11. 16, 17. — And it cometh to pass when he heareth the words of this Curse, that he blesseth himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk IN THE IMAGINATION OF MINE OWN HEART; [That is, in such a way of worshipping God, as I conceive to be pleasing to him, as appears by the mention of God's Jealousie in the words following] to add drunkenness to thirst. The Lord will not spare him, but the Anger of the Lord, and his Jealousie shall smoke against that man, &c. Deut. 29. 19, 20. So he [Jeroboam] offered upon the Altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month WHICH HE HAD DEVISED OF HIS OWN HEART, &c. 1 King. 12. 33. He that burneth Incense, is as if he blessed an Idol: yea, they have CHOSEN THEIR OWN VVAYES, and their soul delighteth in their abominations, Isa. 66. 3. From whence it is very observable (and maketh with an high hand for our present purpose) 1. That it is incident to men to chuse wayes and methods of their*

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their *own* [i. e. of their own devising] for the worshipping of God, in stead of, and before, the wayes prescribed by himself for that purpose.

2. That these *ways* of mens *own* devising and *choosing*, are their *abominations* [that is, ways for which they must answer to God, as for things that are abominable in his sight] or at least, may be, yea, and sometimes are such. 3. (And lastly) that notwithstanding such *ways* be their *abominations*, yet they are wont *animatus deperire*, to love and *delight* in them with their whole soul; and to be enflamed with zeal over them (as the Scripture testifies in many places, and our own experience in the importune and bloody Promoters of the Service-Book, doth confirm) as if God himself loved and delighted in them as much as they.

There are many more texts and passages of like notion with those now cited, and which offer the right hand of fellowship unto the Doctrine, which hath been made good by them: but those already mentioned, I judge abundantly sufficient for the eviction of this Truth, That all worship of humane device, or contrivement, is of an unpleasing resentment with God, and will be cast as dung in the faces of those, that shall offer it unto him, of how sweet a favour soever it may be unto themselves; and consequently, that the appointment and commanding of his own Worship, is a darling prerogative unto him, the glory whereof he will not give unto another. The truth of this Doctrine runs clearly enough in other veines of Scripture, besides those in which we have seen it already; by the opening and arguing of which we might have more interviews and appearances of it in somewhat differing shapes. How strict is the charge of God unto men, neither *to add to, nor take from, the Word which he hath commanded them?* that they *turn not aside from it, either to the right hand, or to the left?* Deut. 4. 2. & 5. 32. & 12. 32. & 17. 20. & 28. 14. Josh. 1. 7. Pro. 30. 6. Rev. 22. 18, 19. Doubtless they who turn their backs upon the Appointments and Commandments of God concerning his Worship, and will impose Apocryphal Forms and Models of Worship upon men, saying (in effect) first to God himself, Except thou wilt be pleased with that worship which we prescribe and enjoyn, thou shalt not be worshipped at all, as far as we have to do: and then unto Men, Unless you will worship God after our mode, and with the worship which we enjoyn you (be it good, or be it bad, true, or false) you shall not worship him at all, if we can help, or prevent it; such men (I say) as these, do, in a very broad sence, both *add unto, and diminish from, the Word which God hath commanded*. I shall not need to interpret, or plead the cause of this assertion. And (indeed) for the conviction and satisfaction of

of those, that are spiritually ingenious, and tremble to detain the truth in unrighteousness, that which hath been already argued and pleaded from the Scriptures, I know cannot but suffice. But for those that are *contentious* [or of cavilling spirits] and do not, will not, obey the Truth, if it toucheth the apple of their eye, and thwart their carnal interest, the Sun and a Sack-cloth, the Light of the Noon-day and the Darkness of the Mid-night, seven Demonstrations from the Scriptures, and seven Stories out of the Golden Legion, are much alike. Yet let us (in a few words) further weigh and consider that ingenuous acknowledgment of the great Apostle *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, that he *had not a dominion over their Faith*, 2 Cor. 1. 24. To have *dominion over a mans Faith*, requireth a lawful Authority to impose any thing upon him to be believed, which the Imposer pleaseth, or judgeth meer, upon the account of his own judgement and will, and under what penalty he pleaseth : and again, to prohibit him the believing any thing upon the like terms. Now then evident it is, that neither *Paul*, nor *Cephas*, nor *Principalities*, nor *Powers*, nor *Cherubims*, nor *Seraphims*, nor all the Angels in Heaven, have any *dominion over the Faith* of men, but only He, whose judgment is universally, and in all things, infallible, and his will in like manner impeccable. Especially the *Dominion* we speak of, is not competent unto, cannot reasonably be imagined to be vested in such a creature, that *knoweth but in part*, that *seeth darkly*, and *through a glass* only, and besides, is *sold under sin*, and *in, or with, his flesh*, *serveth the Law of sin* : all which our Apostle acknowledgeth of himself ; and that which concerneth imperfection of knowledge, he affirmeth of all men without exception even of the most enlightened *Christians*, 1 Cor. 13. 9, 12. And if so great an Apostle, who was so high in favour with God, as to be *taken up into the third Heaven*, where he heard words *that were unspeakable*, and *which it was not lawful* [or, possible : these were the same with *Paul*] *for a man to utter* ; and who (doubtless) knew more of the mind of God, and of Christ, than all the world besides ; and beyond all this, was so mightily subdued under the Truth, that (as he professeth) he *could do nothing against it*, but [do, and suffer all things] *for it* ; yea, and was so effectually mortified unto the world, that he *could most gladly spend and be spent*, for the souls of men ; if (I say) an Apostle thus highly accomplished above all his fellows, and in the largest capacity amongst ten thousand, to be made a Lord over the Faith of men, yet was not by God judged meet for such an investiture (himself declaring, and professing as much, as we heard) how intollerable is it in men, who, being compared with *Paul*, scarce hold the proportion of the snuff of a Candle to the

the Sun, to claim, and exercise that most high and sacred *Dominion* we speak of, as if it were vested by God in them? Or do they any whit less than claim & exercise it, who under sore mulcts and penalties, impose a necessity upon men to believe, subscribe unto, and teach what conceits, opinions, and tenets they please, in things appertaining to God, and withall, to renounce and abjure all such opinions and persuasions which please them not? Or do not they broadly usurp the *Dominion* we speak of, who command men at the peril of their Estates, Livelyhoods, Liberties, &c. to believe that such or such a Form of divine Worship, which pleaseth them, pleaseth God also; yea, and that it pleaseth him better than any other Form, yea, than any other Worship whatsoever, which they are capable of performing, or exhibiting unto him? Or do they thus command men to use their Form of Worship, whether they, whom they command, believe it to be pleasing unto God or no? If this be the sence of their command, it is yet more imperiously impious, and horridly prophane. Therefore in commanding them to use it, they implicitly, yet next to explicitly, command them to believe it to be lawful and good. Nay if they rightly understood the nature and import of that command of theirs we speak of, they do not only command those, on whom they impose it, to believe that the Form of Worship enjoined them, is simply lawful, but that it is better and more acceptable unto God, not only than any other set Form of Worship they can use, but then any other Worship, kind or manner of Worship whatsoever, of which they are capable. For he that shall use any set Form of Worship, without such a belief as this (I mean, without being perswaded in his soul, that he cannot Worship God better in any other way, or by any other Form) exposeth himself to the curse denounced, *Mal. i. 14. Cursed be the Deceiver, that hath a male in his flock, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing.* [*debile*, a weak thing, as the Latine rendreth; which *Grotius* explains, by *vitiosum*, aut *foemininum*, that which is faulty, or feminine] *For I am a great King, saith the Lord of Hosts, and my Name is dreadfull among the Heathen.*

What hath been demonstrated from the Scriptures concerning the Prerogative of God touching his own Worship, is not obscurely taught by the Light of Nature it self, and by the Principles of Reason; especially if we shall allow them now and then a little assistance and relief from the Scriptures. For,

1. The Light of Nature carrieth us up to the Truth we contend for, by these gradations or steps. 1. It teacheth us that God is to be worshipped by his creature, Man. 2. That he is to be worshipped with

such Worship, which is most agreeable unto the excellency of his Nature and Divine Being, and which is most honourable for him to receive. 3. It teacheth us further; That that Worship, which is most agreeable unto his Nature, and most honourable for him to receive, is to be dictated and prescribed by the most perfect knowledge of his Nature and Being, that is to be found. For he that is in any degree ignorant of these, cannot direct a Worship, or manner of Worship, agreeable to Him, or to his Nature, as he may, who perfectly knoweth Him, and comprehendeth all his Perfections. 4. The same Teacher likewise informeth us, That every creature is finite, and partaketh of Entity and Being but by measure, and that God the Creator of all things, is Infinite, and He only. 5. From the same hand, we are clearly instructed yet further, That the most perfect of Creatures, being Finite, is not able, no not by the greatest enlargement of its endowments or abilities from God, to know perfectly, or to comprehend the Infinite Perfection of the Divine Being: but that God, by the advantage of his Infinity, is able fully to comprehend it, yea, that he doth actually thus comprehend it. By this series, or chain of natural Maxims, we are advanced unto the ground of our present contest; namely, That God himself is only competent to prescribe and dictate his own Worship, all Creatures being strangers, in comparison of himself, to his most transcendent Excellency and Being, and consequently, incompetent to contrive or frame a Worship suitable unto him; and much more to impose (some, upon others) and this with extream rigour, any Form of Worship of their own devising, this (being interpreted by the premises) being a Worship unsuitable to the Nature of God, and so unacceptable unto him. Again,

2. The Light of Nature enlighteneth our Judgments with this Truth, That the Worship, manner or kind of Worship, which is agreeable to the Nature of God, and so accepted with him, is but one and the same Worship, or kind of Worship, as his Nature is but one and the same. So that though he commandeth *every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation under Heaven*, to worship him, yet the Worship which he requireth of them all, is for manner, and kind, but one and the same, not diversified in any such respect as these, by any exigency of circumstance, one, or more, whatsoever. What this one kind of Worship is, which we affirm God requireth of all, shall be shewed in due place, and this ere long. In the mean time proceed we with our Argument in hand. If God requireth one and the same kind of Worship of all People and Nations, doubtless he hath not invested any of these Nations, much less the Rulers or Governours of any of these

Nations, with any authority, or right of power to worship him, with what kind, or form of Worship they please. Much less hath he given authority to any one part, or party, in any of these Nations, to impose upon all the rest in their Nation, contrary to their Judgments and Consciences, what manner, form, or kind of Worship they fancy to be best pleasing unto him. Or if he hath given any such authority as this unto the ruling or prevailing party, in any one of these Nations, questionless he hath given the like, or the same, unto the like party or parties in them all : for there is no competent Reason assignable, why any difference should be made between them in this case. If then the Rulers and Governours of all Nations under Heaven, have an equal right of Power derived unto them from God, to impose upon the People under them, what Worship seemeth good in their eyes, Idolatrous Princes shall have as much, and as lawful authority to impose any Idolatrous Worship upon those under them, as those that know God, and are truly religious, have to impose a better Worship upon those that are subject unto them. For there is little question to be made, but that in the eyes of an Idolatrous Prince, an Idolatrous Worship will seem as good (or better) as the truest Worship doth in the eyes of a Prince truly *Christian*.

If it be said, A Prince imposing an Idolatrous Worship, abuseth his Authority : but this ought not to be pleaded in Bar to the regular and due exercise of the like Authority, by another Prince. I answer,

1. If he hath Authority from God to impose such a VVorship, which he judgeth to be good, and pleasing unto God, he doth not abuse this Authority by acting according to the tenor and purport of it, which he doth when he imposeth only such a Worship, which he really judgeth to be good, however he be mistaken in his judgement in the case.

2. A Prince professing *Christian* Religion, abuseth his Authority as much (or rather more) when he imposeth upon his Subjects, being *Christians*, any false VVorship, or such which is displeasing unto God. And however, when he adventures to impose any VVorship at all, not being infallible, he runs a double hazard of abusing his Authority. For first, he may mistake the VVorship, which he imposeth, supposing it to be legitimate, and pleasing unto God, when (indeed) it is spurious, and an abhorring to his soul. Men of great learning and parts, and studied in the Scriptures far above the ordinary rate of Princes, have, with great confidence, built errours and mistakes as great and dangerous as that, upon misprisions of Scriptuere. Secondly, The Prince we speak of, runneth yet a greater hazard of abusing his Authority in imposing any VVorship at all, because he cannot know, no nor

yet conjecture upon any probable or competent grounds, that it is pleasing unto God, that he should impose any thing in this kind. Yea, it is scarce any question at all, but that to compell men by penal threatenings and executions, to submit to any form or kind of Worship, be it never so plausible, is an abuse of any created Authority whatsoever.

Besides all this; If God imposeth one and the same Worship, or kind of Worship, upon all Nations under Heaven (which is a supposition of unquestionable Truth, as was lately hinted with the ground of it) he should act contrary to his own Design or Command in this behalf, in case he should give Authority to the Rulers of these Nations, or to any party in them (respectively) to set up or impose what forms or kinds of Worship they should apprehend and judge to be most fitting to be imposed or set up. The grant of such Authority would be a direct course to fill the world with as many forms and shapes, or kinds of Worship, as there are Nations in it, and Rulers over them; yea, and all that enormous variety of superstitious, idolatrous and false Worships, which are, or have been imposed, countenanced, practised in the greatest part of these Nations, and which hath been hitherto charged by *Christians* generally upon the Devil, and his subtilty and bloody malice against the precious Souls of men, must, upon a supposal of such a grant from God to the Rulers of these Nations, as that mentioned, be rather resolved into God. This Argument might be further improved, but that we make haste. Therefore.

3. Neither doth it in the Eye of Reason, look like one of the ways of God, to leave some Mens Consciences free, and at liberty, to serve and worship him according to the best of their understandings, and of that light of Knowledge which he hath given them; and yet withal, to subject and enslave the Consciences of others unto the humours, wills, and fancies of men, in these most high and sacred concernments. Least of all seemeth it to have any affinity with his Righteousness, Wisdom and Impartialness, visible enough in all his other Administrations, to subject the Consciences of such men who have known the Scriptures from their youth, and have spent all their days, it may be many years, in a conscientious and diligent study and search of them; and withal, are known to be men of Integrity, of signal Piety, of great Knowledge in the things of God, of a vertuous and Christian Conversation, &c. to subject (I say) the Consciences of great numbers of such Persons as these, in matters appertaining to the Worship of God, unto the pleasures, dictates, and conceits of a few men, who have wholly (in a manner) addicted themselves either to other studies, or to secular employ-
ments.

ments (if not to ways and practises more alienating from God then these) and so must needs be (comparatively at least) strangers to the Scriptures, and unacquainted with the mind of God here, is a device or contrivance of quite another Spirit then that which breatheth in all the Councils, Dispensations, and Administrations of God. He did not make the lesser but the *greater Light to rule the Day*: though he gave a great preheminance in strength unto the Lion and the Unicorn, above Man, yet did he not judge it meet to give unto either of them, *Dominion over the Works of his Hands, or to put all things under their feet*: His Wisdom and Goodness invested his Creature *Man*, (having furnished him with knowledge and understanding) with this honour and dignity. Neither did he intend or make the Body to be the light of the Eye, but the Eye to be the light of the Body, *Mat. 6. 22*. Nor did he order or intend the dim-sighted World for a light unto the Apostles, nor the unfavoury Earth to be as Salt to season them; but the Apostles to be the light of the one, and the Salt of the other, *Mat. 5. 13, 14*. They who are called to places of Magistracy, or Rule, and to the honour of Law-making, in any State, or Community of Men, look upon themselves as being at full liberty to abrogate or repeal any Establishment, or Law, made by their Predecessors for the worshipping of God in any external way or form of Worship; and consequently, as being at liberty themselves to worship God for the future either with a set Form, or without, as in their Consciences they shall judge it best pleasing unto God. Yea, they claim a liberty, though they shall make a penal Law to constrain the generality of their People to such or such a stinted Form in the Worship of God; yet to grant unto what persons they please, whether of themselves or others, an exemption from this Law. Now this is that which I affirm, as the clear dictate of Reason, That God hath left the Consciences of all men equally bound, and equally free, in the matter of his Worship; and that, as he hath commanded and bound Kings and Princes, and Law-makers themselves, as well as meaner men, to worship and serve him with the best of their understandings; so hath he exempted even the meanest sort of men, as well as Kings and Princes themselves, from all compulsion, whether by Laws, or otherwise, to worship or serve him upon any other, I mean upon any lower, meaner, or worse terms.

4, (And lastly, at present) Reason it self prompteth us with this *Dilemma* also in the case: Either God hath himself prescribed unto men how, or with what kind of Worship he will be worshipped; or else he hath done nothing in this kind, but left men at liberty to worship so or so, as their own Judgements and Consciences shall reach

and

and direct them: If this latter be affirmed, (which yet is not so *Christian* to affirm) then whosoever shall impose a particular form of Worship upon men, opposeth the Counsel and Design of God about his Worship, which (according to the supposition we now argue) is to be worshipped as every mans own Judgement and Conscience, not other mens, shall teach and direct him. If the former horn of the *Dilemma* be taken hold of, and acknowledgement be made, that God hath himself prescribed and commanded his own Worship, the terms and manner of it, (which I presume will be the sober *Christians* choice) then for men to impose any other, any form of Worship of their own or other mens devising, must needs be presumption in the highest. For what is this but to set their *thresholds* by Gods *threshold*, and their *posts* by his *posts*? *Ezek. 43. 8.* yea, to affront the Wisdom of God with their wisdom, his Authority with theirs; and as much as in them lieth, by their Commandments to make the Commandments of God of none effect.

If it be replied and said, That though it be granted, that God hath prescribed and commanded his own Worship, yet this is to be understood onely of the matter or substance of it in general (together with the inward manner of performing it) not that he hath prescribed any particular form of words, wherein or wherewith he would have men constantly to worship him. If this were so, they should sin as much against his Commandment of Worship, who worship him in or with conceived Prayer, as they who prescribe forms of Prayers unto others; inasmuch as no conceived Prayer is any whit more prescribed or commanded by God, then a form of Prayer imposed; and as for the matter of either, conceived Prayer is much more likely to be delinquent, then the other. For that which hath been deliberately composed and digested by many, and these equal (or rather much superiour) in Piety and parts of Learning, is like to have more spiritual weight and worth in it, and be more acceptable unto God, then any thing conceived, and uttered *ex tempore*, and without premeditation, by a single person, and he (it may be) less considerable in both. To all this, I answer:

First, Conceived Prayer, is, for the nature and kind of it, that very Worship (at least, as far as Worship consists in Prayer; for there may be other Worship, or parts of Worship, then that which is exhibited or performed unto God in Prayer) which he prescribeth and commandeth, at least unto those that are, or by the use of means, may be, capable of it, as all Ministers of the Gospel generally are presumed to be. By conceived Prayer, I do not mean onely that kind of Prayer which is conceived and uttered *ex tempore*, without study or premeditation,

tation, or which is never used but once by him that uttereth it; but that likewise which is or hath been conceived, framed, and digested by him that uttereth it, although with deliberation and study, and hath been frequently at several times, especially if with any occasional variations, used by him. In the Scriptures, especially in the New Testament (where the light shines clearest for the discovery of the mind of God in all points concerning Prayer and VVorship) we hardly find the same prayer used the second time by the same person. For though Christ be said to have *prayed the same words* a second and a third time, yet by comparing *Mat. 20. 39.* with *v. 42. & 44.* and *Mark 14. v. 35.* with 36. it appears that it is to be understood of the *same words* in sense, matter, and import, or in effect; not the same in sound, letters, or syllables, (words being put for matters or things frequently in the Scriptures :) yea, all the Prayers here recorded to have been made, either by Christ himself, or by his Apostles, or other holy persons, and which found acceptance which God, were framed by them with a special and particular reference unto the present occasions that were before them (respectively) and therefore cannot but be judged to have been *conceived Prayers* (in the strictest sence of the VVords) yea, all the Exhortations unto the heavenly Exercise and Duty of Prayer, delivered either by Christ or his Apostles, intended onely that kind of Prayer, which we commonly call conceived Prayer, which the Saints were to conceive and indite by the help of the Spirit of God, (*Rom. 8. 27.*) which they who believed did receive, *John 7. 39. Act. 5. 32. Rom. 5. 5. & 8. 14, 15, 16. 2 Cor. 5. 5. Gal. 3. 2. Ephes. 1. 13. 1 Thes. 4. 8. 1 Joh. 2. 27. & 3. 24. & 4. 13.* which places, (at least the most of them) cannot be understood either of the miraculous Gift of the Holy Ghost, or of the giving of him to the Apostles onely, and some particular Christians with them. This will be evident unto those that shall please to take a little pains to peruse and ponder them. Several others of like import might be added unto them. Besides, that the said Exhortations unto *Prayer*, were meant of conceived Prayer, and not of praying by any stinted form imposed, at least by any Civil Authority, least of all imposed with threatnings of Civil Mulcts and Penalties; are all of them Truths so full of their own Light, that to levy any further proof of them, would be but as the lighting up of a Candle to help men to see the Light of the Sun. Books, and forms of Prayer of humane contrivance and imposition, would (we may very reasonably presume) have been in the days of those Exhortations, and for many days after them, as prodigious and astonishing unto Christians, as the turning of the Sun into darkness, and the Moon into blood.

2dly. Whereas it was pleaded, That a Prayer framed by the concurrent abilities and gifts of several pious and learned men, and this upon mature consideration, must needs in Reason be a more effectual Prayer, and better accepted with God, than a Prayer conceived and brought forth on the sudden by a particular man, and he (many times) of no great parts or learning neither. I answer,

1. This plea of comparison between prayer and prayer, (be it admitted) doth not make the face of our *Common-Prayer-Book* to shine at all. For who can make *affidavit* that the prayers here are the issue of the abilities or gifts, I do not say of *many*, but of *any* pious or learned man? There is little question to be made, but that in *Latine* it first saw the light of the Sun, when the gross darkness of Popery was spread over the face of the Earth (in these parts of the world) and when the mother of it (the Church of *Rome* I mean) was guilty but of little *Learning* and less *Piety*. It is likeliest to have been the officious elucubration of some superstitious Monk or Friar, calculated by the best of his art and skill, for the meridian of the devotions of that Apostate Church in his dayes. As for those worthy and good men in King *Edward's* dayes, who with a much better intent than event, took pains to fetch it out of *Latine* into *English*, making account that they had left all the dregs and excrementitious matter behind them, we were their compurgators formerly that they were not the Authors or Compilers of this unhappy Book, nor guilty of the folly committed in the begetting of it.

2. The goodness or excellency of a Prayer for matter, phrase and structure, is rather an argument why it should be left free for men to use, when, and as far as they see cause, than why it should be imposed. Because, 1. The imposition of it is rather matter of prejudice, and disparagement unto it, than otherwise; Imposers seldom dealing in such commodities which are choice, sound and good, but very frequently in those which are faulty, and base. 2. The imposition of it alters the property of the goodness of it, & makes it to become an Idol (as we formerly argued the case) and consequently exposeth it to the jealousy and high displeasure of God, and hereby to an utter abolition and ruine (as we concluded likewise from the Scriptures) And therefore, as it is better, of the two, to make an Idol of Dirt or Clay, or some such vile material, than of Silver, or Gold, or of any thing of value, because it is better that that which is of little worth should perish and be lost, than that which is more precious and useful: so is it, in this respect at least, more to be wished, that such prayers, and such forms of Divine Service (so called) which are corrupt, and not fit to be

be used by any good *Christian* upon any terms, should be imposed, than those which are more commendable, and might be some wayes serviceable and helpful to the piety and devotions of good people otherwise. 3. (and lastly, for this) As *Samuel* in reprovng *Saul*, demandeth ; *Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and Sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord ? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken, than the fat of Lambs ;* 1 Sam. 15. 22. So is a Prayer conceived and brought forth in obedience unto the Counsel and Will of God, though it be not so eloquent, nor the matter of it so choice, nor the method or frame of it so exact, of better acceptance with God, than a Prayer read out of a Book, whether without or contrary unto the Command of God ; (for it hath been proved from the Scriptures, that these two, in the case of Worship, are but of one and the same consideration) yea, though this prayer, for matter, language and frame, should be of as happy a calculation, as the piety and parts of men in their greatest perfection, are able to advance. But,

3. (And lastly) To the reason or ground of the Plea mentioned, I answer ; That in case a great number of men (supposing them both pious and learned) should convene and take what time they please, to compose a Prayer, with an intent to impose it, or with a desire that it should be imposed upon their *Christian* Brethren, it is not so probable (as is pleaded and pretended) that the Prayer framed by them upon such terms should have any spiritual or real worth in it, or prevailingness with God, above the prayer conceived and uttered without premeditation (I mean, in reference unto this particular prayer, more than unto others) by a person in gifts and parts of learning, inferiour to them, only supposing him to be a good man, and fearing God. For they who are imployed about making Prayers to be imposed upon *Christians*, are about *Satans* work, making Iron yokes and snares for the Sons and Daughters of God : and certain it is that God takes no pleasure to be assisting unto men, no not unto his own, in the way of such an occupation : and where God with his blessing is absent, no undertakeing, especially no spiritual undertakeing, is like greatly to prosper in the hands of men, though never so well accomplished for their work. Whereas he that conscientiously addresseth himself unto God by prayer, and is careful to pray according to his Will, doth the work of God ; and consequently, may (as it were) of course expect the assisting presence of God with him in his way, which many times acteth men above their line and sphere ; and at no time, when it is vouchsafed, suffereth them so to miscarry, as to lose their acceptance with God.

And thus we see that all Worship, formed, prescribed, and imposed by men, is heterogeneal and spurious, and which the Scriptures, yea and all principles of sound reason disdain to give the right hand of fellowship unto.

What will our zealous and severe Promoters of the *Common-Prayer-Book-Worship*, say to these things? If God be against them in their Cause, who or what can be with them (to any purpose?) The colours wherewith they commonly paint the face of it, to give it the best complexion it will take, are very washy, faint, and fading: So that what *Austin* spake in a case that would not so well bear it, I may, upon a try'd account, say concerning the Cause that now hath been argued: *Scio contra hanc, quam defendimus, sententiam, neminem nisi errando disputare posse*: I know that no man can dispute against the opinion we maintain, but by erring [from the Truth.] The common Pleas for the lawfulness of the use of stinted Forms of Prayer, I pass over, onely with these two *Memorandums*: 1. That the most substantial proof of the meer lawfulness of them, will not reach the justification of the use of them by any Person (much less will it justify the penal imposition of them :) the reason is, because there is nothing done by any person in or about the Worship or Service of God, but is either more then lawful (as either expedient or necessary) or else unlawful. That which is expedient, or fitting to be done in the case we speak of, is (to a degree at least, or in a sense) necessary; and so more then simply or meerly lawful: that which is not expedient, or not fitting to be done, is (questionless) if it be done, unlawful. Therefore they that undertake to prove the lawfulness of set Forms of Prayer, and no more, though they should make good their enterprize, yet would they not hereby lay a sufficient Foundation for any person actually to use them. The reason hereof may be touched before we conclude. Yea, it is as true of all deliberate and moral actions, that the lawfulness of them simply and indefinitely considered, doth not prove it to be absolutely or universally lawful for any man to do them; but onely under and with appropriate and due circumstances. Therefore (to put in this by the way) to justify the lawfulness of the use of things indifferent in the Worship of God, meerly upon this ground, that they are indifferent in themselves, and out of the VVorship of God, and so lawful, is sufficiently ridiculous and childish: but to justify this use of them against the grain of so many material and weighty circumstances as rise up against it, and with greatest importunity dissuade from it (especially in this Nation) is little less then bidding a defiance to all Christian Ingenuity, and a disclaiming of all respects both to God and Man. 2. That the lawfulness

fulness of stinted Liturgies, or set Forms of Prayer, though never so demonstratively proved, would be no salve to heal the sore (or rather the many sores) of the *English Service-Book* : Some account hereof was given towards the beginning.

The bent of the present discourse hath stood chiefly against the imposition of Forms for the Worship of God, and partly against a submission to the use of them upon the account of such imposition. Let us now taste the spirit of those Arguments, or of some of the chief of them, by which the Lords and Masters of these impositions are wont to endeavour to make that which is crooked, straight. They that of old pleaded for Idols, had (it seems) their *strong Reasons* (such as they thought *strong*) to maintain the Cause of their Clients. *Produce your Cause, saith the Lord: bring forth your strong Reasons, &c. Isa. 41. 21.* And men of imposing Principles, appear upon all occasions, to be as confident as they were, who went before them in the way of their iniquity, *binding heavy burthens, and grievous to be born, and laying them on mens shoulders,* (as our Saviour chargeth the *Scribes and Pharisees* to have done in his dayes, *Mat. 23. 4.*) Some of these, in the height of their confidence, that whoever were ignorant, they were men of knowledge, and of profound and sharp understandings, demanded of *Christ* (in the name, as it seems, of all their fellows) not with a little indignation, *Are we blind also?* (*John 9. 40.*) being jealous that he had sorely disparaged them, in binding them up in the same bundle with the ignorant world. But as highly conceited as they were of their knowledge and wisdom, the Lord *Christ*, dealing plainly with them, in reproving them, calleth them *fools*, and *blind guides*, over and over, *Mat. 23. 16, 17, 19.* And (if it be lawful to call a Spade a Spade) the great Proctors of the *Impositions* we speak of (reserving unto them all the honour due unto their learning and parts, otherwise) when they rise up in their might to plead for these *Φάσκειντες εἶναι σοφοὶ, ἐμὰ ῥάβ-
βισσιν*, professing themselves to be wise [and to carry all clear before them] they become fools [and leave their Cause quite behind them] *Rom. 1. 22.* yea in these Disputes they seem scarce men, or to have put away child-*ish things*. A late great *Hyperaspistes* of *Liturgical* devotions, and with-
all (as you may presume) of all their appurtenances, and pre-requi-
sites, as 1. *Episcopacy* (the Pillar, and Ground-work of all) 2. Of *Penal Impositions* of them, without which they would not be suffered to live, where the light of true *Christianity* shineth. 3. Of subjection to the Commands of Authority, whether with scruple, or without, a Principle that will enable men to swallow them, though they be *Camels* (with severall other Hierarchical notions, and devices, neces-
sary

sary for the supporting of that frame) this Champion (I say) of *Liturgies*, who alloweth us not the liberty of calling him by his Name, yet insulteth with this Argument, over all that opposeth him in his way.

*That Service of God which is consonant to holy Scripture, is lawful :
The Service of God performed by a Prescribed Liturgie, is consonant
to holy Scripture. Ergo.*

This Syllogism, were it narrowly sifted, how much dross would be found in it ! Both Propositions being ambiguous, and speaking nothing distinctly, the whole Argument amounts to nothing, unless it be a snare to catch the unwary and less considerate. For the Philosophers Rule is true : *τὸ μὴ ἐν σημαίνειν, ὁδὲν σημαίνειν ἔστι.* Not to signify one thing [distinctly, and with determination] is to signify nothing. Let us touch a particular or two, in either Proposition. In the *Major*,

1. The word *lawful*, signifieth both that which is *lawful* simply, or in the nature of it, and circumstances secluded, or that which is *lawful* in the practise of it, where circumstances alwayes have to do, and many times render that unlawful in the doing, or to be done, which in the nature of it, was *lawful* enough, and might have been *lawful* also in the Practise. We shall not need to give Instance : the Notion is common and clear. So then, this Proposition, *That Service of God which is consonant to the holy Scripture, is lawful*, may be true in the former sence of the word *lawful*, and yet false in the latter (which yet, questionless, is the sence of the Syllogizer : for he argues for the lawfulness of the use or practise of the *Service* he speaks) For that *Service of God*, which is really, truly, and in it self *consonant to holy Scripture*, may be dissonant and contrary hereunto in the judgment and conscience of those on whom it is imposed, and so the use of it, during this state of their judgment, unlawful unto them. There are other circumstances, besides this now mentioned, which may render even such a *Service of God as is consonant to holy Scripture*, unlawful to be practised. But we shal leave these at present, to exercise the Thinking faculty of the Disputer. Only I desire leave to put this Question to him at this turn : Whether, it being supposed, that the *Service of God*, contained in the Liturgy of *Basil*, *Gregory*, or any of those now used in many of the Reformed Churches, is as *consonant to the holy Scripture*, as that set forth in the *English Service-Book*, is notwithstanding *lawful* to be used by the Ministers of this Nation ? If not (for I presume he will appear on the denying hand) then is there some-what more than a *consonancy to holy Scripture*, required to make the *Service of God* **L A W F U L** in the practise of it, and this, in the judgement of this *Argumentator*, must be

be the Command of that Authority, within the Jurisdiction of which it is performed. A worthy Position ! the Consequences whereof I wish he would seriously and unpartially compute at his leisure. But,

2. Neither is this expression, or phrase, *consonant to the holy Scripture*, free from ambiguity in the sense & meaning of it, as the Episcopal dialect hath enlarged its signification. For they who are wont to plead for an imposition of Liturgies and Ceremonies, call that which is not contrary to the express letter of some particular prohibition or other, in the Scripture, *consonant to the Scripture*, as well as that which is agreeable to some express command there. Now then, if by *consonant to holy Scripture*, he only means, not repugnant, or not contrary, to some express prohibition in *holy Scripture*, his Proposition is broadly repugnant unto the Truth. For it hath been formerly proved from the *holy Scripture*, that in matter of Worship, not to be commanded, and to be prohibited, are of a like consideration before God. Therefore *that Service of God*, which is *consonant to the holy Scripture* only in that Episcopally-appropriate sense of the phrase, is not upon such an account, *lawful*. And that this is, or must be his sense of the said phrase, or expression, is evident from hence, because otherwise his Argument would have nothing to do with his Cause. For certain it is, That *prescribed Liturgies*, or, *the Service of God performed by them*, are not *consonant to holy Scripture* in the other sense of the phrase; that is, are neither formally, or expressly, nor yet virtually, or consequentially commanded there. Thus we see the *Major Proposition* of the *Grand Syllogism* in the *Grand Debate*, is homonymous, captious, and fallacious: which is enough to lay the credit of the Argument managed in it, in the dust. Yet neither is the *Minor* better conditioned, if not worse. For,

1. Here we have our double-tongu'd expression again, *Consonant to holy Scripture*. So that here is lying in wait also for those that do not look well about them.

2. These words, *a Prescribed Liturgy*, are as double-minded, as those other. For they may signifie, either a *Liturgie* only penned, or drawn up, in a method, or form of words, and phrases, and proposed to be used direction-wise, in, or about the Service of God: or else, *a Liturgy* imposed by Authority, under civil mulcts and penalties. The word, *Prescribed*, is, and may be taken, either in the one, or in the other of these significations. Though in the former sense of the words, the Proposition should be admitted, yet in the other it will make Anti-Scriptural Divinity. For, *The Service of God performed by an I M P O S E D Liturgy*, is (as hath been formerly proved) so far from being *consonant to holy Scripture*, that the high displeasure of God is here

revealed from Heaven against it. But enough of this in the Premises. Yet,

3. (And lastly) Suppose we should be so prodigal, as to give away all we have in exception against both this and the former Proposition, (which amounts, as we have found by computing it, to be no small summe) and so grant Conclusion and all, and all in the Disputers own sense (so that this be not too unreasonably exorbitant from his words) yet should we not hereby gratifie him at all in (the beloved of his soul) the *English Service-Book*. For when he saith (in this latter Proposition) *The Service of God performed by a prescribed Liturgie, is consonant to holy Scripture*, I cannot think that by *A Liturgie*, he meaneth, any Liturgie whatsoever, or that is possible to be invented by men (although the expression, whatsoever his meaning be, is not competent or workman-like) but such a *Liturgie* which shall contain nothing in it, either in matter or form, contrary to any precept, or direction found in the Word of God. Because it is too too plain and palpable a case, that *the Service of God performed by any other Liturgie*, than one of this calculation, cannot be *consonant to the holy Scripture*. Now then this being his meaning in the *Minor Proposition*, his Argument with the largest indulgence of approbation and consent, concludes nothing in favour of his *Service-Book*, nor proveth, that *The Service of God, performed by it, is consonant to the holy Scripture*. For that there are some things contained in this Liturgie, or Book, which are contrary to precepts and directions found in the Word of God, was shewed towards the beginning of this Discourse ; and might be proved in many more particulars, than are there produced. We need go no further than to the *Letany* (so called) of which such glorious things are spoken by this Author, pag. 8. that he seems to adore the *fulness* of it, as much as *Augstine* did, *plenitudinem Scripturae*, the fulness of the Scriptures themselves : and more generally, the men of his inspiration are impotent in their *Elogiums* and commendations of this piece, as if in it they saw the *Service-Book* in all her glory. Yet unto him that shall weigh it exactly in the ballance of the Sanctuary, it will (I believe) appear to be a very corrupt member, and in which the unclean Spirit of Will-worship acteth his part, in some things more childishly, but in more, more contradictingly to the right rule of Worship, than in any other part of the Book. Yea, were there a diligent and narrow search made into it, a just volumn might be made of the weak and unworthy things (only with their sober and necessary explications) that would be found in it. *First*, It is no good *Omen*, that in the very Inscription, or Title of it, where it is ordered, or commanded, to be *used* on certain dayes, as on *Sundayes*, *Wednesdays*, and *Fridayes*, there is a mani-

manifest contrariety to the *Holy Scripture*, which reproveth and consequently prohibiteth, the observation of *Dayes and Times*, as well as of *Moneths and Years*, Gal. 4. 10. And why not on *Tuesdays* and *Thursdays*, as well as on *Wednesdaies* and *Fridaies*? Doubtless upon no better account, than that on which *Jeroboam* offered upon the Altar which he had made in *Bethel*, on the *fifteenth day of the eighth moneth*, even the *moneth which he had devised of his own heart*, 1 Kings 12. 33. If such devices as this be not the very quintessence, and spirit of Will-worship, I confess I have no understanding in the Mystery. Again, when it is commanded to be *U S E D* on *Sundays*, &c. the meaning of the word *used* (as the use and practice allowed, if not commanded also, in those Churches or Chappels, termed *Collegiate*, interpreteth it) is (distributively) either *sung* or *said*, the like liberty being granted in these words, concerning, *venite exultemus*. Now the Scripture in the New Testament maketh a flat opposition between *praying* and *singing*, Jam. 5. 13. Nor doth it speak any where of singing any thing, but either of *Psalms*, or *Hymns*, or *Songs*. Now then if the Letany be a Prayer, one or many, and not a Psalm, Hymn or Song, it cannot be sung with any consonancy to *holy Scripture*. Thus we see the very door opening into the admired Letany, is polluted: let us view the Fabrick it self a little, we shall soon find more irregularities, and pollutions here.

1. How oft do they that pray by this Letany, transgress our Saviours rule concerning Prayer, *μὴ βαρυσλόγησιν* use no battologies or needless repetitions? 1. When the Minister prayeth, *O God the Father of Heaven, have mercy upon us miserable sinners*, I desire to know, 1. Whether this be an entire Prayer, or a piece of a Prayer. 2. Be it an entire Prayer, or a piece of a Prayer, Whether it is not intended that the Peoele present should joyn with him in it, and pray for the same thing, when and whilest he prayeth? If this be so, (and I presume that for shame it will not be denied) then it is a battologie, or needless repetition, for the People immediately, and as it were with the same breath, to repeat or pray over the same words again; *O God the Father of Heaven*, &c. So, then according to this account, if the Minister prayeth with the People, as they pray with him, our Saviours rule against needless repetitions in prayer, is no fewer than four several times broken on both hands, within the compass of the four first petitions, or Prayers of the said Letany. Or if such repetitions as these be not vain and needless, and such as Christ prohibited, I desire the great Master of this piece of devotion, that he will 1. Distinguish between repetitions, and repetitions, and define which are *needless*, and which are *necessary*, and then 2. Give us a substantial account that

that those mentioned, are of the latter, not of the former kind. But to our Query ; If the words queried upon, contain an intire Prayer, why do not the People testifie their consent and desire to have it granted, by saying *Amen* at the end of it, (as himself saith, p. 14. that men are obliged to say unto such Prayers, and as is more agreeable to *holy Scripture*, 1 Cor. 14. 16.) rather then instead thereof to repeat the words of the Prayer? Certainly there cannot be a more pregnant instance of a vain and *needless repetition* then this, since the word *Amen* would signifie altogether as much, yea the very same thing which this *repetition* doth. If the said words be to be taken as a Petition onely, and as a member and part of a Prayer, why do the People interrupt the Minister in the midst of his Prayer, seeming rather to affront and mock him, by saying the same words after him, then to express any seriousness of Devotion with him? Therefore in this notion of the words, there is in the Peoples repetition of them, a manifest insurrection against that Apostolical Precept, *Let all things be done decently, and in order*. Or is it *decent and orderly*, that the Minister should not be suffered by the People to finish the Prayer which he hath begun, without their interruption? Again,

2. This unchristian misdemeanour of *battologizing*, is committed seven or eight times over, in the repetition of these words by the People, *Good Lord deliver us*. For why should not the prolation of them onely once, be as effectual for all needful ends and purposes, as the making of so many sounds of the same words, so nigh together? But it is well, as the case stands, that the fond spirit of VVill-VVorship contented himself here with so few miscarriages in *vain repetitions*, as seven or eight, when as, upon as good an account in reason, he might have multiplied them to seventeen or eighteen, or to a greater number: at which stone, being blind, he stumbled soon after, in prescribing these words, *We beseech thee to hear us good Lord*, to be repeated twenty, or one and twenty times over, within the compass of so much devotion as may be dispatched without making halte, within the space of half a quarter of an hour. But

3. Besides these gross and palpable *Battologies*, which cannot lightly escape any mans eye, that doth but cursorily view that highly honoured, but more justly condemned, Model of Devotion, the *Letany*: there are several others obnoxious enough to a little observation. For, 1. Presently after request here made for deliverance *from all evil and mischief, and from sin*; another request is made for deliverance from some evils, and some sins, as from *Pride, Vain-glory, Hypocrisie, &c. from Fornication, and all other deadly sin*, [as if *Pride, Hypocrisie,*

pocrisie, Malice, Envy, &c. were but sins *venial*.] By the way, They that are so desirous to cover the shame of the *Romish* Parentage of their darling Letany, much forget themselves, to suffer so express a lineament of her Mothers feature to be seen in her face, as the making onely of some sins *deadly*, (which supposeh others to be *venial*.) 2. After deliverance begg'd from the crafts and assaults of the Devil, the like deliverance is within two or three lines begg'd again from all the deceits of the Devil; and afterwards, from those evils which the craft and subtilty of the Devil worketh against us. 3. After prayer made for deliverance from contempt of Gods Word and Commandment, prayer is here again made that we may diligently live after his Commandments; and the third time, that we may amend our lives according to his holy Word. Passages and expressions symbolizing in words, sence, and meaning, as near as these, found in the conceived Prayer of an Anti-formist, would be called *tautologies*, to the great disgrace and contempt of it, by persons who have addicted themselves to *Liturgical* (I had almost said, *Lethargical*) Devotions. 4. VVhen prayer hath been here made unto God to give and preserve to our use *THE FRUITS OF THE EARTH*, so as in due time we may enjoy them; we are compelled to pray again in dry weather, for such moderate rain and showers, that we may *RECEIVE THE FRUITS OF THE EARTH* to our comfort, &c. and yet again in wet weather, for such weather whereby we may *RECEIVE THE FRUITS OF THE EARTH* in due season; and yet after all this, *That our Land may yeild us HER FRUITS* of increase. 5. After the People have pray'd, *Have mercy upon us*, (being beholding to their Minister for a Vocative-case) they must pray out of hand yet again, *Lord have mercy upon us*; and for all this, yet again, *Christ have mercy upon us*; and after all these agains, yet again (once more) *Lord have mercy upon us*: and now all the Beads of this string are told. 6. This Prayer, *O Lord arise, help us and deliver us for thy Names sake*; is presently after corrected and amended onely thus, *O Lord arise, help us and deliver us for thine Honour*. 7. When we have prayed, *From our Enemies defend us, O Christ*; we must pray unto Almighty God, (as if our Letany did a little *Socinianize*) *Save and deliver us from — the hands of our Enemies*. 8. About the middle of this Letany, after the thick and short Prayers, the Minister, as if the People and he had been idle untill now, or at least about some other business then praying, admonisheth his People to pray; saying unto them, *Let us pray*. 9. (And lastly, to pass by several other impertinent *Duplicats* and *Multiplicats*, or vain repetitions of Petitions within the compass of the *Letany* onely) When the Minister and People shall have prayed with the uttermost devotion

they can make between them, for *Charles our most gracious King and Governour, for our gracious Queen Katharine, Mary the Queen-Mother, James Duke of Yorke, &c.* they must recruit their Devotions very speedily, or else they will pray the second time (which is not far off) but coldly for *our most gracious Sovereign Lord King Charles, our gracious Queen Katharine, &c.*

2. Neither is this admired piece of Devotion so notoriously deformed (as we have seen) with Tautologies and empty Repetitions onely, it hath sundry other Ailments and Diseases hanging upon it. 1. All those eight Petitions or Prayers (if such they be) put into the mouth of the Minister, unto which so many *Good-Lord-deliver-us's* are subjoyned, as far as the Minister uttereth or prayeth them, are absolute and gross Non-sence, having no Verb at all in them, onely the People are enjoyned to supply the defects of their Minister, and to underprop his pendulous words with a principal Verb; and so between the Premises of the one, and the Conclusion of the other, we have (with much ado) a Syllogism of Prayer formed. That the Minister should pray by halves, or make half a Prayer, and the People pray another half Prayer, and these two halves be clapt together to make a whole Prayer, is (certainly) a new-fangled device of praying, and such whereof the Scripture, yea, and all Principles of Reason, not superstitionized, are ashamed. But, 2. Though *Good-Lord-deliver-us*, joyned to the preceding words of the Minister, make a competent and grammatical sence together; yet those one and twenty *Some-whats*, (for Prayers they are not, and what distinct appellation to give them, I know not) which are relieved with the like number of *We-beseech-thee-to-hear-us-Good-Lords*, do not of themselves make any sence at all, nor any very good sence in conjunction with the words assigned unto them for their relief: For to say, *That it may please thee to do this and that, We beseech thee to hear us good Lord*, is little better then a Solocism; at the best but an unusual and harsh construction.

3. Here are several expressions and passages besides, not so considerate or well-digested. 1. To pray to be delivered from *Deadly Sins*, (which supposeth the distinction of Sins into *venial* and *mortal*, to be consonant to the Scriptures) sounds rather Pontificalian then Protestant Devotion (though I think the distinction may in a sence be admitted) this was touched before. 2. To pray unto God *to preserve all that travel by Land or by Water*; is it not to pray for Highway-men and Thieves, Pirates, and Murtherers (if they be travelling either by *Land or Water*) that they may escape the danger of being apprehended and punished for their wickedness, and consequently that they

they may have peace and continue undisturbed in their horrid practices, as well as honest and harmless men in such a condition ? 3. These expressions, *By thy Agony and bloody Sweat, by thy Cross and Passion, &c.* be they intended, whether *sensu Mediatorio, Adjurativo, re-memorativo*, or in what sence soever, make no good sound in the ears of a good Conscience, especially that is tender and unlearned. 4. Every person that is enjoined to pray for the *sending down of the HEALTHFUL Spirit of Grace upon our Bishops and Curats, &c.* hardly understands, in what sence, why or how, the Spirit of God is here termed *healthful*. 5. That God should be considered in his power of *working Great Miracles*, when he is desired to *send down his Spirit upon our Bishops and Curats, &c.* Doth it imply (for it seems so to do) that God *worketh a great Miracle when he sendeth down his healthful Spirit upon any of our Bishops and Curats ? &c.* 6. (And lastly) That *Bishops* should be here twice prayed for, whenas *the Lords of the Council, and all the Nobility*, have only one prayer allowed them, and this a very short and simple one, may reasonably be imputed to their great need of being often prayed for, their *wants* being great and many, and their temptations many through their great *abundance* : which might likewise unhappily occasion their desire, that the Prayer for them, and their *Curats* (for so they are wont to interpret, *Pastors and Ministers of the Church*) might have the precedency of the Prayer of the *Lords of the Council and all the Nobility*. Thus much (by the way) concerning the *Letany*, the Head Quarters of the *Service-Book*, where the highest straines of Devotion, that rule here, are supposed to lodge and reside. That they so much admire it who are so deep in love with it, needs be no mans admiration. It is a riming Proverb (I suppose) of the same race and descent with the Book it self :

Si quis amat ranam, ranam putat esse Dianam.

One silly Frog who dotes in love, will swear,
Diana's beauty shineth not more clear.

I have at (present) taken notice only of a few of the deformed lineaments in the face of it ; in my survey of it, I discovered many more : but those mentioned I judge competent to break the snare, which the zealous and importune commendations of it by some, who have (most unworthily) enslaved themselves in Devotion to it, may prove unto others, who (haply) would be more enclinable to worship God purely, and with acceptance, were not this uncouth Form of

Devotion with swelling words of vanity obtruded on them. Never was there (I verily believe) a Liturgie, or piece of any Liturgie, of so wild and barbarous, of so mishapen, odd and disordered a contrivance, that ever presumed to look the world in the face ; or at least, that was gloried over at the tenth part of that rate, at which so many men of commendable parts, learning, and understanding otherwise, make boast of the *English* Letany. The Apostles exhortatory question to the *Galatians*, might be very seasonably put to them at this turn, *Τὸ ὕμνος ἐβόωντες*, *Gal. 3. 1.*

We now return to the pursuit of our main undertaking, where we brake off from it upon occasion of that diversion, with which the Reader hath been made acquainted. We had proceeded so far in asserting it, as the incommunicable Prerogative of God, to appoint and enjoin his own Worship, that there remained nothing of what was further intended herein, but only the satisfying of such Arguments, or pretences, by which this Prerogative of God is attempted to be overthrown, by entitling men to a right of power to impose Worship of their own prescribing, as well as He.

First, The examples of the godly Kings in *Juda*, as of *David*, *Asa*, *Jehoshaphat*, *Hezekiah*, *Josiah*, &c. interposing and imposing, in Religious affairs, are frequently employed for the justification of the imposition of Forms of Worship by the *Christian* Magistrate, and this under very grievous mulets and penalties, at this day. I answer, they may be employed for such a purpose, and yet to very little or no purpose at all. For,

1. These Kings had holy Prophets amongst them, immediately inspired by God, who from time to time, upon all occasions, were sent unto them with the mind of God in their mouths, *1 Sam. 22. 5.* *2 Sam. 7. 4, 5. & 12. 1.* *2 Kings 19. 2, 6, 7, &c.* *2 Chron. 15. 1, 2. & 18. 7, 18, &c. and 19. 2. and 20. 14, 15, &c. and 25. 7, 8, 9, 15, and 26. 5. and 34. 21, 22, 23, &c.* Whereas Magistrates in these dayes have no such *internuncij* between God, and them, infallibly to declare his mind unto them in difficult cases.

2. They had the mouth of God himself alwayes near unto them by *Urim* and *Thummim*; by consulting by these, they might know his mind in all cases of concernment, and be resolved in all their doubts, without any danger of mistake. See and compare, *Nam. 27. 21. and 1 Sam. 23. 2, 4, 9. and 30. 7. and 28. 6.* *Surplice* and *Lawn-sleeves* are not *Urim* and *Thummim*.

3. However the said Kings interposed with their Authority in mat-
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ters of Religion, yet they never imposed upon their People any new Form of Worship, either of their own or other mens devising : but on the contrary still interdicted and prohibited all such kinds, methods, and manners of Worship which were of Humane Invention, as being provoking in the sight of God, defacing, abolishing, and destroying all their accoutrements, and whatsoever was relating unto such Worship, either in a way of allurement or provocation, or of subserviency in any kind ; yea, they spared not the Priests themselves, the Grand Promoters of this Worship, but did severe execution upon them also, *1 Kings* 13. 2. compared with *2 Kings* 23. 20. and *2 Chron.* 34. 5. Now then to reason thus ; The Kings of *Juda* had power to enjoin the Worship of God appointed and commanded by God himself, and to abolish all other kinds of Worship of a Forreign and Humane extraction : Therefore *Christian* Magistrates have a right of Power to appoint and injoin what Forms or Kinds of Worship they please, whether they be prescribed and appointed by God or no ; to reason thus (I say) plainly argueth, that men have taken some bribe, or other, to blind the eyes of their minds and understandings.

4. Whatsoever was done by the godly Kings of *Juda* in matters of Religion, was plainly commanded by God himself in the Law of *Moses* : in what they did upon this account, they neither added to, nor took from his Word. See *Exod.* 23. 24. *Deut.* 7. 5. and 12. 2, 3. *Exod.* 34. 13. And for the Commands of God, relating unto his external Worship, and to the preservation hereof in purity, which were delivered unto the *Jews*, other than such which the Law and Light of Nature also teacheth (which were not many, if any in this kind) are not only not obliging upon any other Nation, but are no sufficient Warrant unto any to practise, or put in execution, the things commanded in them. One reason whereof, may be, because they were given unto the *Jews* with special reference unto the counsel and design of God in, and about that Nation and People, and are not serviceable for any design, which at this day he hath on foot, in, or about any Nation in the World ; as (for instance) to make any of them *typically holy*. I suppose that no considering man will affirm, that those Laws, or Commands, laid down, *Deut.* 13. 5. and v. 8, 9, 10. and v. 15, 16, 17. which were as effectually binding unto the *Jews*, and their Rulers, as any Moral Precept, will justify in these dayes any Nation or Magistrate, that shall do the things contained in them. So then, that the godly Kings of *Juda* did that in matters of Religion, lawfully, yea or commendably, which they were by God commanded to do, is only a prevaricating Argument, to prove, that *Christian* Magistrates may do that,

that, either commendably, or lawfully in matters of the same concernment, which God hath not commanded them.

5. When these Kings did command the observation of those very things by the People, which God himself had commanded them in his Law, the People, (at least such as feared God, and best understood themselves among them) did not so much mind the Kings Authority in commanding them, as the Command of God himself concerning them. When that good King *Josiah* made a *Covenant before the Lord*, to walk after the Lord and keep his Commandments, &c. and caused all that were present of Jerusalem and Benjamin, to stand to it, it is expressly said, That the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the Covenant of God, the God of their Fathers; implying, that it was the Covenant or Commandment of God for the doing of those things, which the King caused them to promise they would do, which principally moved them to that obedience which they yeelded unto them, and not the motion, or (if we will not be content without more than is due) the command of the King. 2 Chron. 34. 31, 32.

6. The Kings we spake of, were Types of *Christ*, who was as well a Prophet, as a King: and in this respect it was proper for them to take care of, and to interpose in, matters relating to the Worship of God, as well as to the Civil Government. But since *Christ's* coming in the flesh, types either in persons, or in things, have no place in the Church. So that to vest a power of regulating and ordering the Worship of God in *Christian* Kings, is to make them Types of *Christ*, and consequently to deny, that *Christ* is come in the flesh. Upon the like account the High Priests among the *Jews*, being also Types of *Christ*, who was as well a King as a Priest, the better to answer and fill their relation to their Great Anti-type, were admitted by God into part and fellowship of the Civil Government. But for Ministers of the Gospel to admit of politick investitures, or to accept or exercise any Civil Power, is to *Judaize*, and to deny him that bought them, to be as yet come into the World. But that the Kings of *Judah* were Types of *Christ*, is evident, and withal generally acknowledged in the persons of the two first of that race, which was in special manner appointed by God to sit upon that Throne, *David* and *Solomon*: and there is little reason to question the same relation in the rest, considering that they also were Heads over the same typical Nation, and exercised the same Bipartite power in governing it, which the other did; not to add that they were also in their Loyns, when they acted in the typical relation mentioned, and so in a sence (frequently owned in the Scripture) were that, and did that, which they (their fore-fathers) were, and did.

7. The Nation and People over which these Kings reigned, were designed, and accordingly prepared and fitted by God, to be made a Nation and People *typically holy*; that is, prefignificant, or pre-figurative, by and in their external and ceremonial Holiness and Conformity to the Worship of God then prescribed unto them, of the real sanctity and holiness, as well inward as outward, which was to be found in Christian Churches, and in the People of God under the Gospel. This *typical* consideration of the Nation of the *Jews*, is more then overtur'd or sparingly intimated in the Scriptures: The Apostle *Paul* plainly asserteth it, where he saith, *For we* [Christians and true Believers] *are the Circumcision* [that is, the People prefigured by those that were circumcised, meaning the *Jews*; the Anti-type being often expressed by the name of the Type, as *Rom.* 1. 28, 29. *Jer.* 30. 9. *Ezek.* 34. 23, 24. & 37. 24, 25. *Mat.* 11. 14. & 17. 2. *Heb.* 13. 10. *Rev.* 2. 9. & 3. 9. with others] *which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoyce in Christ Jesus, &c.* *Philip.* 3. 3. See further to this purpose, *1 Pet.* 2. 9. and what Expositors generally, and more especially the *Dutch* Annotators write hereon. Now to order this Nation so, that it might serve the Counsel of God in its typical Relation specified, upon the better and more significant terms, it was necessary that by a strong hand, and by the Authority and Power of their chief Rulers, they should be kept in a Conformity to the Law of God concerning his Worship (especially) and not suffered (as far as might be) to corrupt themselves with any false Worship, or by going a whoring after any strange God. And it was the rather necessary that they should be thus restrained from polluting themselves with Idolatry in any kind, because they were (more generally) excessively prone to break out in this way of sinning, and had many temptations from the Nations round about them, to entice and provoke them accordingly; the means of Grace (in the mean time) by which men are, contrary to their sinful propensions, drawn to love, & fear, and cleave fast, and close unto God, being but very sparingly, and by scant measures, in respect of Gospel allowance, vouchsafed unto them. Now then, there being nothing of all this long story, belonging unto, or found in Christian Churches, who live under Christian Kings, but all things contrary or otherwise, it is very importune, and against the grain of all reason, to subject these Churches unto these Kings upon the same terms on which the Church or Nation of the *Jews* was by God himself subjected under theirs. The Rule in reason is, *Contrariorum contraria [non eadem] sunt consequentia*: Contraries have Consequences, not the same, but as contrary as themselves.

8. The Kings of *Judah* were nominated and appointed by God himself

self immediately unto this Kingdom: the Throne whereof was settled by him upon *David* and his Posterity, as an heritage for ever, (1 *Sam.* 16. 12. 2 *Sam.* 7. 12, 16. 1 *King.* 2. 4. & 8. 25. and elsewhere :) So that though the People accepted them [respectively and successively] for their Kings, and invested them with their Ensigns of Royalty, and so are said to have *made* them *Kings*; yet their Right and Title to the Kingdom, was given unto them by God without the People, and before they had declared their acceptance or owning of them. Now then, as they were Kings extraordinarily called by God, without any dependance upon, or mediation of the People by their election unto the Throne: so their Authority and Power were in an extraordinary way also, and by an unusual line, measured and set out unto them. For as God, when he unbareth his Arm, and worketh Miracles, is observed in such works as these, to exceed that rate of Perfection at which he worketh in the ordinary and standing course of his Providence, and in conjunction with inferiour and second Causes, (many fair overtures, if not full proofs whereof, the Scripture affordeth us, and the reason likewise of the thing, is not far of, although we shall not now touch it :) So likewise when he giveth Authority and Power unto Kings and Princes immediately by himself, it is very reasonable to conceive that he giveth it by a larger measure, then when he imparts and communicates it by the People: For, as observing the course of Nature, he cannot cause a Sheep to bring forth a Lion, although by his unlimited Power he is able to create a Lion of what stature, and strength, and fierceness he pleaseth: So when he joyneth himself with the People in deriving Authority and Power unto Kings (which he always doth, when he useth their mediation in the election of Kings) he can derive no more of these unto them, then what is competent for the People to derive with him; yea, no more then what he maketh the People willing as well as able to derive with him: However, (as hath been said) if he pleaseth to make Kings immediately, of and by himself, without the People, he may invest them with what proportion of both he pleaseth. So then, the measure or proportion of Authority and Power which was vested by God in, and accordingly exercised by the Kings of *Judah*, is no steady ground whereon to warrant the same proportion or measure unto Christian Kings. The reason hereof hath been expressed already; namely, because no King of this denomination received his call unto his Royal Dignity immediately from God, as those Kings received theirs; but all of them *mediante Populo*, mediately by and from the People: and consequently can have no other, no more, or greater Power then what is or was inherently in the People, and lawful for them

them to part with unto them. And certain it is, that no person can lawfully or reasonably give a power unto any man to regulate his Conscience about the Worship of God, as he pleaseth; himself having no power in this kind, but onely to regulate it according to the Will and Commandment of God. Neither had the Kings of *Judah* themselves any such power as this given unto them by God, as hath been formerly shewed.

9. (And lastly) Notwithstanding all the great power they had from God, yet when any of these Kings did cause their People to enter into a Religious Covenant or Oath, they did it not against the wills, nor without the consent of their People; yea, these were as forward and active in the business as the Kings themselves: *And they* [King *Asa*, with the generality or Body of his People, as appears from the Context, both subsequent and preceding] *entered into a Covenant to seek the Lord God of their Fathers, with all their heart, and with all their soul; That whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel, should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman. And they swore unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with Trumpets, and with Cornets. And ALL Judah rejoiced at the Oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, &c. 2 Chron. 15. 12, 13, 14, 15.* So that the King imposed nothing upon the People, but what they most freely, yea most joyfully imposed upon themselves. And that is observable by the way, that there is no other penalty or punishment anywhere threatned against any transgressor of any Order, Edict, or Imposition, concerning Religion, or the Worship and Service of God, published by any of the said good Kings, either with or without their People, but onely that of *death*; which is the punishment expressly commanded by God himself to be inflicted in such cases; I mean upon Idolaters lawfully convicted, (*Deut. 17. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.*) Yea, *Jehosaphat* would not so much as appoint *Singers* unto the Lord to go before the Army, without consultation first had with the People about it, *2 Chron. 20. 21.* See also concerning *Hezekiah*, *2 Chro. 30. 2, 4, 5.* They who would compell the good Kings of *Judah* to invest *Christian Magistrates* with their power, in matters of Religion, do very unworthily in restraining them from instructing these Magistrates by their worthy Examples in and about the exercise of this power. But I trust that from henceforth these good Kings will be innocent from the great offence of strengthening the hand of *Christian Magistrates* in oppressing the Consciences of their good Subjects with penal Impositions in matters of Religion.

Secondly, Some plead, That God hath admitted *Cesar* (the *Christian*
H *Cesar*)

Cæsar) into part and fellowship with himself in matters of his Worship, so far, as with the advice of his Spiritual Senators, (his Lord-Bishops) to make what by-Laws in matters of this nature, he pleaseth, and to impose any Form, one or more, of Divine Worship, upon his Subjects, under what Penalties he thinks fit ; so that the Worship imposed in these Forms be *consonant* to the Word of God. These men would fain incorporate this notion into the Body of our Faith, That the things of *Cæsar* would otherwise be too narrow and inconsiderable, for a Person of so august and sacred an investiture, unless it be supposed that the Almighty giveth unto him the right hand of Fellowship in ordering the Affairs of his Worship, in forming and reforming, in changing and altering it at his pleasure ; yea, and in punishing with great severity, those that shall not bow down to his present establishment, whatever it be.

Although the spirit of this plea hath been quenched already, yet let us take the pains to draw a little more water to cast upon it. Therefore,

1. The Masters of this Plea, in pleading the Cause of their Tythes, often make use of an *Emblem*, which though colourable onely for that service, will be of a real accommodation here : The Eagle setting her Nest on fire, and so destroying her young ones, with a burning Coal, which stuck (though she minded it not) to the piece of Flesh that she had sacrilegiously snatch'd from off the Altar, and carried to her Nest, upon which the disaster happened ; is an apt Resemblance of those Calamities & Judgements which sooner or later fall upon the Houses and Families of such Kings and Princes and Grandees of the World, who intrench upon the Quarters of Him whose Name is *Jealous*, and cannot be content without being adored as *Dominus utriusque Seculi*, as having Dominion over the things of both Worlds. If men will presume to set their posts too near unto the posts of God, he will up with them again, and burn them with fire. Instances hereof may be found in the premises. But,

2. It never yet was, nor (most certainly) ever will be proved, either from the Scriptures, or from any Principle of sound Reason, that Kings or Magistrates are by God joyned in Commission with himself, to impose Models or Forms of Worship, such as they please [onely with this Condition, That they think or suppose them to be agreeable to the Scriptures] upon their fellow-Creatures, (the Sons and Daughters of Men) yea, upon such Persons who in all likelihood, and according to all experience in like cases, know and understand the mind and will of God concerning his Worship, much more perfectly than
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themselves; yea, and whom God hath commissioned to teach and instruct them in his Worship and Service [I mean the faithful, able, and learned Ministers of the Gospel.] But this Nail hath already been hammered sufficiently.

3. As for those Spiritual Senators, mentioned in the Argument by the name of *Lord Bishops*, without whose advice the Commission granted to Kings and Magistrates (as is pretended) to umpire the Worship of God, is (it seems) superseded; the Scripture is so far from authorizing or appointing them to be Assistants or Advisers unto Kings and Magistrates, in or about the execution of such a Commission, that it taketh no knowledge of any such Generation of Men, unless it be to shut the door against them, that they might not get into the world, (*Mat. 20. 25, 26.*) though since they have committed Burglary, and broke open this door, and are gotten in the House of God, to the great annoyance and disturbance of the peace of it. The Scripture maketh mention onely of one in those days, who did φιλοπρωτονειν (*3 John 9.*) wish, or desire, to be a Lord-Bishop; whose character was, that he would not suffer faithful Ministers of the Gospel in the Church, no not the *Apostle* himself, who was so peculiarly loved by Christ, but *prated against him with malicious words*. And to me it is the first-born amongst many *Arguments*, that such a kind of Officers in the Church, as these men pretend themselves to be, were never intended by the Lord Christ; namely, that neither by Christ himself, nor by any of his Apostles, he hath given any name whereby the Church should know or call them, or distinguish them from others. It opposeth all the believing faculties of my Soul, to think that Christ should either forget or neglect to mention the prime and Head-Officers of his Church, (as our Bishops (so called) conclude themselves to be; and as indeed they are, if they be any at all) by an appropriate and distinct name, whenas he hath provided and given such names unto those that are esteemed subordinate and inferiour to them, as *Pastors, Teachers, and Deacons*. For those Apocryphal Officers we speak of, have sacrilegiously robb'd those true Officers of the Church, *Pastors and Teachers*, of the name *Bishop*, which was given in common unto them; and having alter'd the property of the Divine Consecration of it, have sanctified and devoted it unto themselves, lest being ἀνόνομοι, without a name, they should be found ἀδόκιμοι also, spurious and illegitimate. Besides, as Christ left such Officers no name, so neither hath he left them any work. For he sufficiently provided for all the spiritual occasions of his Church in all Ages, by those Officers whom the Apostle expressly nameth, *Ephes.*

4. II. Read this verse, with the three next following, and you will find

the Bishop to be a superfluous, and very impertinent Officer, in, and for the Church. But as being left by *Christ* without a name, they made a dishonest shift (as we have heard) to get one: so being left without work also, they found out an imployment likewise for themselves; as namely, to serve the Church with indifferent [that is, with impertinent, and needless] things, with a few *harmless* Ceremonies [*lenitate verbi tristitiam rei mitigante*] as Tippetts, and Rochets, Caps and Hoods, Black Gowns and White Surplices, Crossings and Cringings, Standings up, and Kneelings down, with several others of the like profound calculation: all which both joyntly, and severally, are as effectual and proper to build up the Church in Unity, Love, and Peace, as the confusion of Tongues was to promote the building of the Tower of *Babel*, and the poyson of Asps to nourish and prelerve the natural Life of Man. As for their imployment about Ordination, which together with their Name and Title of *Bishop*, they have injuriously wrested out of the hand of those true Officers of *Christ*, *Pastors* and *Teachers* (with their respective Congregations) this takes up so little of their time, and so seldom engageth them, that had they not found themselves other work, which might last all the year long, and so fill up the void spaces between Ordination and Ordination (which the management of Ceremonies, as they trouble themselves, and others about them, doth) the inconsiderableness of their work would have rendred their importune and loud claim of grandure and great things in the Church, very obnoxious. Therefore (certainly) that kind of Officer we speak of, having neither Name, nor Work in the Church, assigned unto him by *Christ*, was not designed by him to any part or fellowship with those that bear Office here.

4. There was a generation of men in the world, who were wont to make the King glad with their wickedness, and the Princes with their lies, *Hos. 7. 3.* If our Lord Bishops be not the servants of this impiety, the world is uncharitable, and the thing it self next to a miracle. For they lie under greater temptations, to ensnare them in this kind, than flesh and blood (ordinarily) is willing to resist. And the desires of the great things of the world, unto which they are advanced, (for these things are not wont to be found of those that seek them not) proclaim them to be no mighty men of valour to resist temptations. Therefore in this respect also they are not competent to make *Advisers* unto Kings or Rulers in any their consultations about forming or setting forth the Worship of God. *Pessimum genus Consiliariorum Adulatores.*

5. The Worship of God being of a most tender resentment with those, who truly know and fear him, and tremble to offend him, these

men being violent and importune obtruders of Forms and Ceremonies; are the most unfit men in the world to be called unto Counsel, when this affair is to come under consideration.

6 Concerning the pretended narrowness of the Authority and Power of Kings, in case they should be confined within a Politique sphere, and not stretch themselves unto Spiritual things also : I answer ; 1. That God understandeth better than the wilest of men, what measure, or degree of Power maketh, both the most commodious, and the most comely proportion for any man : and (doubtless) unto whomsoever he giveth it, in this proportion he giveth it. Therefore for any man to call that *narrow*, or *unmeet*, which God in his Word judgeth large enough, and comely, is an unfavoury presumption. Are our weights and measures better, or more exact, than his ? 2. I believe that Kings and Princes would find full employment for their Authority and Power, within their Politick spheres (respectively) work enough to fill their heads, hearts and hands, were they conscientiously intent upon what God, yea and their own honour, comfort and peace, require of them here. But, 3. (and lastly for this) If God should allow unto *Christian* Kings and Magistrates, a right of power to impose Forms of Worship upon men, he should allow them a greater power or liberty than he hath, or hath judged meet to leave unto, himself. For if Kings may impose Forms of Worship, they may impose, one while one, and when they please, another. For who, or what, shall hinder them ? For if God hath given unto them a grant for such impositions, doubtless he hath not limited, or confined them in this grant unto one Form only : nor hath he prescribed any one Form determinately, which it shall be lawful for them to impose, and not any other. Such a conceit as this, never (I suppose) entered into any of those heads which belong unto the hearts, out of which the sad Doctrine of Impositions do proceed. Therefore if Kings and Magistrates may impose, their Impositions, or Forms of Worship imposed, may be as numerous, as the Idolatrous Altars of *Israel* were of old, which are compared to *heaps* [of stones, gathered up and laid in rows] *in the furrows of the field*. *Hos.* 12. 11. Yea, if they shall vary and change their Forms never so often, as (suppose) every day in the year, especially if they see cause (as very probably they may if they look narrowly) or shall imagine or think they see cause, so to do, who can justly reprove them for it ? They may (in Scripture phrase) *shake, not the Earth only, but also Heavens*, as oft as they please : they may disturb and amute the World with Mutations and Changes in the Worship of God without end. Whereas God himself hath given security unto the World,

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That he will not alter the terms of his Worship declared in the Gospel, or ever impose any new Model or Form hereof upon the children of men, whilst the World standeth. And whereas he interpreteth this saying of his, *Yet once more I shake not the Earth only, but also Heaven*, in the notion of a Promise; But now he hath PROMISED, saying, &c. (Heb. 12. 26.) there is little question but that part of the Grace, or good thing here promised, consisteth in this, that he will *once more* [only, or, but *once more*] shake the Heavens (these restrictive particles, but *only*, &c. being frequently omitted, and left to be understood) By shaking the Heavens, he meaneth the dissolving or removing, the present external frame or form of Religion, or of his Worship, together with the great commotions, or high workings in the mindes and consciences of men, that would ensue hereupon. But enough in answer to the second Argument.

Thirdly, Some plead aloud, and with no small confidence, for the joynt-interest of the Christian Magistrate with God himself, in imposing Forms of Worship, by an Argument to this effect: That which is lawful, may be lawfully commanded or imposed by the Civil Magistrate: But the Worship of God performed by stinted Forms, if these be consonant to the Scriptures, is lawful: Therefore such Worship as this may be lawfully imposed by the Magistrate. To both Propositions I answer in their order. To the former,

1. By distinguishing, and explaining in what sence, and how far, it is to be admitted. 1. It is not *lawful* for the Magistrate to command very many things, which may notwithstanding be *lawfully* done by those that are commanded. A single man may lawfully marry, or marry such or such a mans daughter, but the Magistrate cannot lawfully command him to do either the one of the other. So a man may *lawfully* give the one half of his goods unto the poor, as *Zacheus* did; yet the Magistrate cannot *lawfully* impose this upon any man. Such cases as these are without number. Therefore it is but a lame consequence: It is *lawful* for a man to pray, or worship God, by a set Liturgie, or stinted Form of Prayer: therefore it is *lawful* for the Magistrate to impose this upon him.

2. Some things, simply, and indefinitely considered, and circumstances secluded, may be *lawful*, the property of the *lawfulness* whereof may be altered by circumstances, one, or more, intervening. It is a rule approved and made use of by a late learned Bishop of this Land: *Quod licitum est mutatur ex superveniente causa*: That which is lawful may be changed, and become unlawful, by means of some circumstance coming in the way, and lighting on it. This hath been explained, and argued

argued formerly. Marriage or a married life, simply and in it self considered, is *lawful* for men. But if men be either *Eunuchs from the womb*, or *made such by men* (as our Saviour speaketh) to them it is not *lawful*; and other circumstances besides these, may render it *unlawful* unto others. Stinted Forms of Prayer, in themselves, unto some men, under some circumstances may be *lawful*, yet the use of them, especially the constant use of them, to some other men may be *unlawful*; as particularly unto those, upon whom God hath poured out the Spirit of Prayer upon such *rearms*, that by the exercise hereof they are inabled to glorifie God, more than themselves (and many worthy Ministers) are by their gifts of preaching. As though men that are impotent in their limbs, or lame, may use crutches for their support, or relief in going. Yet it had been very sinful for those, who by the special favour and power of God, were, either by *Christ*, or his Apostles, perfectly restored unto the use of their limbs, to have either neglected, or concealed, the grace of God vouchsafed unto them in that kind, by walking upon Crutches afterwards: Yea, it had been *unlawful* for the Council, or any Magistrate, to have commanded them thus to do. So that things that are simply and in themselves *lawful*, but unto some men are, and unto others may, by circumstances, become *unlawful*, cannot *lawfully* (by a general command at least, and which shall equally, and without exception, exact obedience from all men) be commanded by the Magistrate: and consequently, the use of set Forms of Prayer, though *lawful* in it self, cannot *lawfully* be thus commanded by him.

3. (And lastly, for the Proposition in hand) Things that are meerly, and only *lawful* (or in such a sence, as things *lawful*, are opposed unto, or distinguished from things that are *expedient*, as the Apostle himself opposeth them, 1 Cor. 6. 12. and 10. 23.) doubtless are not in whole, or in part, the object of the Magistrates Authority, nor can lawfully be commanded by him. The reason is, because the Power and Authority of a Magistrate is too serious, solemn, and sacred an Ordinance of God, to busie or imploy it self about trifles, or impertinencies, or things of no concernment to the benefit, or good of those under him. The Apostle speaking of the Magistrate, *He is* (saith he) *the Minister of God to thee for GOOD* [that is, for thy *good*, or, thy *wealth*, as the former translation had it] He hath no Deputation, or Commission from God to use his Authority or Power for the gratification of his own humour, or fancy; as by trying conclusions upon thee, whether thou wilt obey him in doing such or such things at his command, which have no reasonable tendency, either to his *good*, or thine, or any other mans. No, the renour of his Commission ingageth him to impose only
such

such things upon thee by his Authority, which have a natural and direct tendency to the benefit and welfare of the State in which thou livest, and consequently to thine own. He cannot *lawfully*, nor without the manifest dishonour of the sacred Ordinance of Magistracy, command thee to pill straws, or throw stones against the wind : which actions notwithstanding are more unquestionably innocent and *lawful* (in the sence explained) then the using of those *indifferent* things called Ceremonies, in the Worship of God ; and of as much conducement to the Publick Good, as they. Therefore it is far beneath the sublime Dignity of the Divine Ordinance of Magistracy, to interest it self in commanding either the one, or the other.

2ly. The Minor Proposition was, *But the Worship of God performed by stinted Liturgies, if these be consonant to the Scriptures, is lawful.* This hath been already weighed in the Ballance, and found light : Yet to give measure heaped up ; we repeat, and adde (together)

1. In that sence of the word *lawful*, in which the same word must be taken in the former Proposition to make that passable (as it was lately declared and distinguished) this Proposition is to be denied. For the Worship of God here described, though it should be admitted *lawful* in some sence, or with reference to some persons ; yet this proveth it not to be of that kind of things *lawful*, which the Magistrate hath a *lawful* power to command, especially by a general Command, and which he intendeth shall oblige all men. It hath been shewed and proved, 1. That there are many things *lawful* to be performed and done by many, which the Magistrate cannot *lawfully* command them to do. And, 2. That some things may be *lawful* for some men to do, which are not *lawful* for all, and consequently cannot *lawfully* be commanded unto all. So that the Syllogism is fallacious and captious, having four terms in it, (as *Logicians* speak) instead of three, and to proveth nothing, unless (haply) the intent of the Author to deceive.

2. A *Liturgy* may be *consonant to the Scriptures* either in respect of the Matter of it, or of the Form, or in respect of both : Nor can it in truth be said to be consonant unto them, unless it accordeth with them in both. Our great *Liturgy-Masters*, in their Discourses upon this subject, and pleadings for the Service-Book, seem to estimate the *consonancy* we now speak of, onely by the *Matter* of the *Liturgy*, not bringing the *Form* to account in their reckoning this way. And (indeed) in reference to the defence of their Service-Book, they do very providentially and prudently, to take no notice of any necessity of such or such a Form in a *Liturgy*, to make it *consonant to the Scriptures*

tures. For the greatest part of the *Matter* of this Book, is justifiable enough by the Scriptures: and for those passages and expressions which are guilty, by far-fetch'd and forc'd interpretations, and by authoritative wranglings, or some semblable phrases, or sayings found in some counterfeit or suspected Antiquity, they are able to qualifie (in part) the demerit of them. But the *Form* of this Book, and the disposition of the several parts of the matter contained in it, is so strangely and daringly extravagant and exorbitant from all Patterns, Methods and Carriages of Prayer or Worship, recorded in the Scriptures, that I know not what salve they are able to find out for the grievous sore of this so broad and monstrous a dissonancy of it from them. And (doubtless) the Form of a *Liturgy*, or Prayer, is not a thing so inconsiderable, but that, though the matter of it be never so savoury and sound, yea, nothing but the very words and sayings of the Scripture it self, yet may the wisdom of the flesh (which is foolishness with God) have so much to do, and so ill acquit it self in the putting them together, that the composition will not be meet to be exhibited or presented unto God. So then, if by a *Liturgy consonant unto the Scriptures*, the Proposition meaneth *consonant* in *Matter* only, whatever the *Form* be, (which seems to be the meaning of it) it is manifestly untrue: *A Worship performed by a Liturgy consonant to the Scriptures* [onely in such a sense] *is not lawful*.

3. (And lastly, for this also) *The Worship performed by a Liturgy consonant to the Scriptures* may be *lawful* [namely if it be left free, and uncommanded] and yet be *unlawful*, if imposed. It was *lawful* for the People of *Israel* to use an Altar made of *whole Stones*, to offer their Sacrifices upon; but if any man had *lift up a tool* upon the same stones, the Altar made of them had been *polluted*, (*Exod. 20. 25. Deut. 27. 5. Josh. 8. 31.*) A lawful Worship, or Form of Worship, by the lifting up of an authoritative Command upon it by Men, becomes hereby *unlawful*, [especially if *performed* upon the account, or by vertue of this Command, as hath been formerly signified] because in such a case the Creature commanding, hath Divine Honour done unto it, and is admitted as an Umpire, and as having Authority over the things of God. For what can we imagine should be the *things of God*, as contra-distinguished by our Saviour himself, unto the *things of Cesar*, if matters appertaining to his Worship, and the disposal hereof, be none of those things, but must be inventoried amongst *Cesars* goods also? He that shall give unto *Cesar* the things which are Gods, and so dismember and cut short his Patrimony in the World, it is much to be feared that he will send him unto *Cesar* for his Reward. But of these things at large already.

We see by what hath been argued upon both Propositions, that in the whole Argument there is little but fraud and confusion.

Fourthly, Some there are who count it a small thing to contend for the lawfulness onely of imposing Liturgies and Forms of Prayer; they run for a higher prize, attempting to evince and prove that there is a singular expediency, and so a kind of necessity of such Impositions. The Argument by which they hope to effect this great thing, sheweth it self in these or the like Colours.

That which is a proper and effectual means to prevent many great and sad inconveniences, and dangerous eruptions of spirit, whereinto Ministers, being left at liberty in their praying publicly, are apt to fall; is very expedient and necessary to be done.

But the imposition of limited and set Forms of Prayer by the Magistrate, is a proper and effectual means for such a purpose. Ergo.

By the *sad inconveniences and dangerous eruptions of spirit, &c.* (here mentioned) the Argumentators mean confusedness of method, tautologies, or needless reiterations of the same things, broken sentences, and ill-accommodated with sense (with such-like) on the one hand: and on the other, Complaints unto God against Truths, under the name of Errours; ventings of dis-affection to the present Government or Governours; Petitions and passages favouring of Sedition, Treason, Rebellion, &c. All these, and the like (say these men) may be effectually prevented by a strict confinement of Ministers unto such Petitions and Forms of Praying which are sound and wholesome, and free from all such strains of scandal and offence. This reason is, all that it is, in face; the heart of it is hollow and empty. For,

I. Let the Promoters of it tell us whether they approve of this arguing or no (which we shall immediately subjoyn) or whether it be not parallel unto theirs.

That which is a proper and effectual means to prevent the sins of adultery, fornication, incest, theft, murther, sedition, treason, rebellion, &c. into which men are apt to fall, cannot but be judged expedient and necessary to be put in execution.

But for the Magistrate to put all men capable of these sins into strong Prisons, and there to keep them close in Chains and Fetters of Iron, all the days of their lives, Is a proper and effectual means to prevent the perpetration of these Sins.

Ergo,

Ergo, This course is expedient and necessary to be taken and put in execution.

There is no reasonable ground of exception against the parallel or comparison : For the means specified in the latter Argument is every whit as proper and *effectual* (nay, of the two, both the more proper and more effectual, as might be shewed, if need were) for the end and purpose here mentioned, as the means pretended in the other, for the end commended there. Wherefore if it be a course most importunately and sencelessly injurious and tyrannical, to keep men in Prison and Chains as long as they live, to prevent their miscarryings in the high misdemeanours mentioned, or the like, before they have offended in any of them : It cannot reasonably but be judged very preposterous, and most unworthy men of Reason and Conscience, to confine the Spirit of Prayer in the most worthy Ministers and Servants of God, (in whom (possibly) he delights to shew himself in much of his glory) within the limits and bars of stinted Forms of Prayer, and these of humane contrivance, onely for fear lest this Spirit failing them, they should fall to pray by an unclean spirit ; and pray either their ignorance, or distemper'd passions, sedition, treason, or the like. Penal sufferings may and ought (indeed) to be inflicted for the prevention of Sin ; but onely upon those that have sinned, not upon the Innocent.

If it be replied, That to be commanded by the Magistrate to use a set Form of Prayer, is not penal unto any man : I answer, 1. That as the unclean conversation of the men of *Sodom* was vexatious to the *righteous Soul of Lot* ; so must needs the Commands of Authority, which are *spiritually* unclean, and provoking to defile the Marriage-Bed wherein God vouchsafe h the enjoyment of himself as a Spiritual Husband (I mean his Worship ; for so the Scripture resembleth it frequently, *Cant. 1. 16. Isa. 57. 7, 8. Ezek. 23. 17, 41.* and in all those places, which are many, where Idolatrous and false Worship are metaphorically expressed under the terms of Whoredom, Adultery, Fornication, &c.) such Commands (I say) must needs be much more afflicting and sadding to the Spirits and Souls of Conscientious and holy Men, when they cannot conceive or apprehend them but as such, [I mean as *spiritually* unclean, and tempting unto folly with a strange God.] 2. To him that cannot, with the good leave of his Conscience, submit to such a Command, which is imposed on him with a penalty, it is (constructively) the same, to have the penalty inflicted on him without the Command given, and to have the Command imposed on him upon such terms.

2. To the Argument under debate, I answer further, That to impose a *Form* of Prayer, is no *effectual* or *proper* means to prevent any of the evils mentioned, unless a *Form* of Preaching be imposed also. For they that are apt to transgress in any of the miscarriages specified, are as likely to do it in Preaching as in Praying; and have no less opportunity (if not a greater) for the doing it, in the former than in the latter. And if all, both Preachings and Prayings, shall be reduced unto *Forms*, the *ABCdarian* Schools may send forth Boys as well accomplished for the publick work of the Ministry, as the *Academician-men*.

3. If the Impositions contended for, were in any degree *proper*, and *necessary* to prevent the sins mentioned, it is more strange than to be believed, that the Lord Christ, who was as *faithful unto God in all his house, as was Moses*, Heb. 3. 2. and withal, as great an enemy to the misdemeanours expressed in the Argument, as the most zealously-devout *Formalist* can be, should notwithstanding, neither by himself, nor any of his Apostles, speak the least word of any such thing; especially, having by the greatest of these given men warning *τὸ μὴ ὑπερβῆναι τὸ γέγραπται* *φρασεῖν*, not to presume (as the former translation rendred it) or, not to be wise, above that which is written (1 Cor. 4. 6.) yea and by himself (as was prophesied of him, Dan. 9. 24.) *sealed up the Vision and Prophecie*, Rev. 22. 18. and so left no place for Humane Wisdom, to interpose for the introducing any more Laws or Constitutions, for the Government or Advancement of his Kingdom, than those, which he hath left us expressly, and in so many words, in the New Testament, together with such, which are virtually, and truly included, and contained in these, not such, which either by forc't, or far-fetch't, or by subtile and glossie consequences, derive their Authority from them.

4. Men that are in any degree meet to be admitted unto the Office and Work of the Ministry, are not so apt, or prone, to fall into any of the foul miscarriages feared in the Argument, or so like unto the *Horse or Mule*, that have no understanding, that their mouths need be held in with the bit and bridle of imposed Forms of Prayer, lest they come too near unto them that are afraid to be touched, or behave themselves so extravagantly and unchristianly in that sacred part of their function, as is suggested against them that they are like to do. If they be of the household of Faith, in case they *know not what they should pray for as they ought*, the Spirit [of God] *helpeth their infirmities*, Rom. 8. 26. But they that Impose Forms, take this work out of the hand of the Spirit, and help mens *infirmities* themselves, inabling and directing them by

Book, *what they should pray for as they ought*. I am far from supposing the sin of imposing Forms, to be that sin against the Spirit, by which men are sealed to the vengeance of eternal fire : but am very near believing, that it is an high affront and indignity offered unto him. For, whereas it is his most glorious interest, 1. To raise what variety of spiritual and heavenly strains of Devotion he pleaseth, in the hearts and minds of his Ministers, whilst they are ministring in the Assemblies of his Saints : And, 2. To give them what sweetness of Lip, what pleasantness of Utterance he pleaseth (as being the Lord of all Language and speech) for the communicatnig of those blessed impressions and conceptions, unto the People before them, to the best advantage for their edification and comfort ; they who confine these Ministers unto their Forms of Prayer, say (in effect) unto the *Spirit*, Thy Ministers, in their publick service, shall be at our allowance, and not thine, both for the strains of their inward Devotion, and for the Language and Words, wherein they shall utter them unto the People. Thou either wilt not, or canst not, order them regularly, and according to our mindes, and as we think meet, in their prayings ; at least, we can have no assurance of thee that thou wilt do it. Therefore we judge it better, and more safe for us to thrust such words into their mouths, and so to necessitate and force such dispositions and desires within them (unless their tongues go one way, and their hearts and thoughts another way, at the same time) which we are sure are innocent and good, then to leave them to thy guidance and assistance (whereof we are so uncertain) although thy purpose and intent may be to glorifie thy self at a far better rate, in them and by them, as in the manifoldness of thy Wisdom, and excellency of thy Power, the riches of thy Grace and Bounty towards thy People, &c. in case we should leave them free unto thee. Whether such a greeting as this be not highly reproachful to the ever-blessed Spirit of Grace, and not far (if any thing) short of Blasphemy? and whether mens impositions of Forms of Prayer (being duly and without any straining, or wresting, interpreted) do not speak all this, yea and more in the same kind unto him, I refer to the consciences of these men themselves, when they shall be thoroughly awakned, to judge. In the mean time, if care were taken closely to pursue the Apostle *Paul's* orders about the Ministerial Function, so as to lay hands upon none, but such as are *Sober, Watchful, Just, Holy, Temperate, Lovers of good things, Apt (or Able) to Teach, not Self-will'd, not soon Angry, &c.* They need not be taught, as we use to teach Children, and defectives in understanding, how to speak, nor yet be feared, or suspected, as persons likely to break out in
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any of those dangerous and enormous miscarriages of themselves, which the Argument pretendeth. Or if those that are created Ministers, be but *Episcopally* given, and true-born Sons of the Church (as some love to speak) even Birds of this Feather are not so unnaturally evil, as to defile their own nest, or to blaspheme either the Government, or Governours, that are so propitious and indulgent unto them. Therefore,

5. (And lastly, for this) There are pregnant grounds of suspicion, that the invention and device of the first Imposer of Lyrurgies, and Forms of Prayer, are not so highly praised, or so hotly prosecuted, by their Posterity in these dayes (especially amongst us) for the prevention of the evils suggested in the Argument, but rather for the promoting of other evils, or prevention of some Good things, because they seem evil unto some. It is a frequent policy, which this Verse expresseth :

Ut vera lateant cause, finguntur inanes.

False grounds for actings sometimes are pretended,
To hide from sight those really intended.

Tautologies, needless repetitions, broken sentences, &c. in the conceived Prayers of Ministers, are no real grief of heart to our Imposers: the Liturgie which they impose, and which giveth pleasures to their soul from the one end of it unto the other, is full of these Warts on the Face of it (as we have seen formerly) nor are their consciences so strait and narrow, but that they can swallow Gnats of a larger kind than these. And those things, which in the prayers of Godly and conscientious Ministers they desire, and intend to prevent, under the hateful names of *venting disordered passions, discontents against their Governours and Government, Petitions and passages savouring of Sedition, Treason, &c.* are the *Christian*, zealous, and faithful deportments of such Ministers, in confessing before God the sins of their Kings, Princes, and Governours, in reprovng them, and denouncing the judgments of God against them, unless they repent: in admonishing and warning the People committed unto them, that they be not ensnared to destruction, by following their evil examples, or complying with them in things displeasing unto God, in praying for them, when they walk in wayes that are not good, that God will please to forgive them and turn their hearts unto his Testimonies, &c. Instead of these, and such like worthy and faithful dealings with their Rulers and Governours,

nours according to the example of the true Prophets of God, and other godly persons of old (as they are recorded in the Scripture) the Forms of praying for them, which are now imposed on Ministers, are flat and fluttering, no ways agreeable or proper to their states or conditions, if they be not persons truly fearing God : which the World too well knows not to be the case and condition of all that bear Rule in it. Yea, in some of these Forms of Prayer, whereof we now particularly speak, such persons are recommended unto God, which are not so much as in being : and in others of them (indeed in most of them, if not in all) such things are desired of God for them, which, if granted, are more like to turn to a snare, or curse unto many of them, than to a blessing indeed. They are more (generally) of a very erroneous and much mistaken calculation, for the real good of many of them.

With what other motives, and carnal projections our high Clergie Men (for these are the Masters of the Mint of all our imposed Forms, with their respective Impositions) are enthused into their fiery zeal to have the Consciences of the free People of *Christ*, both Ministers and People, yoked with the iron yokes of *Lyturgies*, and stinted Forms of Devotion, I shall not now enquire. They claim the highest pre-eminence of Office in the Church of *Christ* : and there being little or nothing for them here to do, as such by *Christ's* assignment (as was formerly hinted) they were tempted by the grandure of their usurped Office, to cast about for some employment answerable hereunto, lest their nakedness should be seen by men; and they bear the reproach of being *Clouds without water*. How prudently and appositely to their purpose, they have pitched upon the ordering and exercising the *Christian* World (as far as they have to do in it) with imposed *Lyturgies*, and Forms of Prayers, would make too long a story to be told here : it may be related else-where at one time or other.

Several other pretences are insisted on to entitle men to a joynt right of Power with God, for the appointment of his Worship by *Lyturgies* especially, and limited Devotions, (for the Procurators of this Cause are so deep in love with it, that unless they carry it, they dye) which are so empty and weak, that to enter into a contest with them, would be to make more of them than they are. *Récitasse, refutasse est.* For they plead, 1. That a Liberty left unto Ministers to use publicly their acquired faculty of Praying, or of talking boldly unto God before People (as our *Grand Debater*, prophanely enough, praiseth : For to acknowledge a gift of Prayer in any man, is unto these men as the shadow of Death) is but fuel to feed the evil humour of pride,

vain-glory, &c. therefore it is better denied then granted unto them: But would they, who thus argue, be content, upon the credit of their Argument, to be denied the possession and enjoyment of their great places of Power and Domination in the Church, or of their luxuriant Revenues? For (doubtless) these are a kind of fuel more apt and dangerous to feed the fire of Pride, Ambition, Lordliness and Cruelty, in them. Or do they think it better for them, that God, by some stroke of Sickness, or the like, should deprive them of their Memories, Wits, Understandings, Learning, &c. because they may make fuel of them, to feed and nourish the sinful humours of Pride, and Vain-glory, then that he should grant unto them the *liberty* of using and enjoying them? The notion of Truth in this Verse, is too hard for the Argument:

Nil prodest, quod non ledere possit idem.

There is no profitable thing,
But what may hurt and damage bring.

2. The loveliness of Uniformity and Consent amongst Ministers united under the same Civil Government, ravisheth the Judgments of some into an high approbation of Liturgies and Forms of Prayer imposed. But may not Ministers be uniform and consenting in Doctrine, unless they all preach, and this constantly, one and the same Sermon *verbatim*? Or would it argue that the Metropolitan and his Diocesan were at odds, [if in case THEY should happen to preach] the one should take his Text out of St. Paul, the other out of St. Peter? *Apagè quisquilias!*

3. Our *Grand Debater* tells us sad Stories of men, whose names, for their most admired and rare faculties in extemporary Praying, might have been *None-such*; and who for their horrid and unparallel'd wickedness and blasphemies likewise need not have changed this name. Of both these characters, compassing the Earth to and fro, he findes three men; in Germany, one *Swenckfield*, (a notorious *Arch-Heretick*) in England, one *Hacket*, a Blasphemer; in Muscovia, *John Basilides*, (Duke of this Country) who (it seems) was an horrid Hell-Hound. For these wicked mens fakes *conceived Prayer* must be cast out of the Church as a menstruous Cloth, and Liturgies and Forms of Prayer imposed, like fine pure white shining Linen, brought into the Church in its stead. *Similes habeat labra lactucas.* Like Cause, like Plea. A carnal Interest (I see) is as bad as a Gift, which (as the Scripture saith)

saith) *blindeth the Eyes of the Wise* : Otherwise a man of his Parts and Learning would never have leaned on such a broken Reed as this, which pierceth his own hand. For is not this reasoning of the same calculation, or rather of a far better? Bishop *John* the thirteenth was a man monstrously vicious, guilty of the foul crimes of Incest, Murther, Perjury, Extortion, and what not? Bishop *Silvester* the second, was a Sorcerer, and compacted with the Devil for his Bishoprick. Bishop *Hildebrand* was a most wicked and reprobate Monster, a Necromancer, a Conjuror, a Murtherer, a man of whose villanies Histories are ashamed : All these were Bishops of one and the same See, and this called *Apostolical* : And besides these three, there have been seven times three more, Bishops also of the same See, equal unto these in ways and practices of all kinds, hateful and abominable in the sight of God and men : And how many others of the Episcopal Investiture in other parts of the World, have been *evil Beasts, idle Bellies, Pests and Vipers*, where they have had to do, who is able to conceive or comprehend? Therefore down with the *Hierarchy*, down with it even to the ground, and let the place of it in the Church know it no more, but let Pastors and Teachers govern the Churches of Christ in its stead. Will the Gentleman acknowledge any concluding force in such an Argument as this? Yet evident it is, that it hath ten times more strength in it, for the removal of Episcopacy out of the Church, then his reasoning hath against conceived Prayer. Because *Satan* sometimes *transformeth himself into an Angel of Light* ; is it any reason why an Angel of Light indeed, should, if it were possible, transform himself into some dark and dull Creature? But (doubtless) such Arguments as these will never bring Liturgies into, nor conceived Prayers out of, request.

Yet there is one Argument more, wherewith the Friends of Liturgy-Devotion imposed, please themselves not a little in their way. This we shall take into a little consideration, and herewith conclude. The Plea is this : That not the use onely, but the imposition also of Liturgies and Forms of Prayer, however now quarelled by some amongst us, have been allowed and practised in the *Christian Church* anciently ; yea, and are at this day admitted and practised in many, if not in all the Reformed Churches abroad. I shall not enlarge the discourse, either with an examination of the truth of what is here affirmed, or in weighing the validity or pertinency of the pretences, in case they should be found Realities and Truths, otherwise then as I find them ready weighed to my hand in the Ballance of the Sanctuary. Onely these two things by the way : 1. That I do not believe the imposition

of Liturgies to be so ancient amongst *Christians*, as seems to be suggested in the Plea. 2. That I know that the Liturgies (if they must be so called) which are used in other Reformed Churches, taste much more favourably of the Reformation, then that imposed upon us.

When our Saviour prophesieth thus, *Every Plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, ἐν αὐτῷ ῥιζοῦται, shall be plucked up by the Roots,* (Mat. 15. 13.) he clearly supposeth that Practices and Opinions in the Church, which are not pleasing unto God, because not of his *planting*, may not onely spring up, and get in hither, and find place here, but also take rooting, [that is, may work and wind into, and (as it were) wrap themselves about the Judgements and Consciences, yea, and insinuate into the affections also, not onely of multitudes of the common or meaner sort of men, but even of many pious, learned, and great men likewise; for without this, they could never take such deep and fast *rooting*, as is here intimated they may.] Now this rooting of the Plants we speak of, in the Church, supposeth a possibility, or rather a probability of their long continuance here, before they come to be plucked up by the Roots. Plants that have thrust their Roots well into the Earth, and have spread and wrapt them about the Clods and Stones thereof, are like to grow, and flourish, and bring forth Fruit for many years. The Metaphor, by which the abolition and casting out of these *Apocryphal* Practices, and Doctrines, from the Church, is here expressed, ἐν αὐτῷ ῥιζοῦται, shall be digged, pull'd, or (rather) *torn up by the Roots*; implieth, that when God will endure them no longer, but set his Labourers and Servants on work effectually to oppose them, in order to their utter and final abolishment, the service may prove somewhat hot, and that the Persons strongly devoted to them, are like to swell, and rage, and fume, and to endeavour to raise a great dust both amongst great and small, to turn every stone; yea, and *Acheronta move*, to dig into Hell, (as the Prophet *Amos* speaketh, Chap. 9. 2.) to save their darling Inventions, their old Idol-Practices and Doctrines, if it were possible, from the hand of Heaven, which is now stretched out against them. Even as a Tree that hath been a long time growing in a Soyl proper for it, and where it hath thriven amain, so that with the numerous Roots of it, it hath taken strong and fast hold on the Earth round about it, far and near; in case it should be forced, or turn'd up by the Roots, either by a Tempest, or strong gust of Wind, or by some Engine devised for such a purpose, or the like, it would tear up the Earth on every side of it, and raise and bring up with it Stones, and Gravel, and Dirt, and whatsoever it could take hold on, to secure it against the force that now attempteth the extirpation and downfall of it.

Again,

Again, That *Hay, Wood, and Stubble* in spiritual and Church-Buildings, may for a long time be in equal esteem with, and pass (more generally) for *Silver, Gold, and precious Stones*; and yet in process of time (it may be not till after many Ages) be detected to be but a base kind of material, very improper for such a building; and so come to be pull'd out of it, and thrown away; the Apostle *Paul* emphatically declareth, 1 Cor. 3. 12, 13. in these words: *Now if any man build upon this Foundation, Gold, Silver, precious Stones, Wood, Hay, Stubble, every mans Work shall be made manifest. For the day [that is, saith Grotius, with other Interpreters, longum tempus, length of time] shall declare it: because it shall be [or is to be] revealed by fire, &c.* Meaning, 1. That Time, in the duration, progress, and continuance of it, will be found as severe and searching an Examiner or Trier of mens Church-work in every kind, as Fire is of Metals. 2. That there are, or may be, some bad Materials made use of in Church-Work, the badness whereof will not (in reason cannot, or is not like to) be discovered or made manifest, until they have passed the test and trial of many Generations. So then, the long continuance, whether of the free use onely, (which is the more tolerable) of Liturgies, and stinted Prayers in the Church of *Christ*, or of the Imposition of them, (which is the more unchristian and insupportable) is an Argument of no interest or weight at all, to justify or prove, either the lawfulness, much less the expediency, either of the one, or of the other. I end with the saying of *Tertullian*: *Veritati potest nemo prescribere, non spacium temporum, non patrocinia personarum*: that is, There is no prescription [or Plea] neither of any length of time, nor of the patrocinations [or Authoritative Assertions of the contrary] of any Persons whatsoever, that is of any force or value against the Truth.

Postscript.

Non attendamus quid ante nos aliquis fecerit, sed qui ante omnes est, Christus prior fecerit. Cypr.

Sapientiam sibi adimunt, qui sine ullo judicio inventa majorum probant, & ab aliis pecudum more, ducuntur. Lactant.

Magnos Errores magnorum virorum Authoritate persuasi, transmittimus. Vadianus.

Cautum debet reddere, non sequacem, Error alienus. Ra. Ardens.

Honestissimum, majorum vestigia sequi, si recto itinere præcesserint. Plin. Ep. 8. 5.

Mala Pax est, & Concordia, quæ inter Pastores & Lupos est. Chemnit. Harm.

Maledicta sit Charitas, & Concordia, propter quam conservandam periclitari necesse sit Verbum Dei. Luther in Gal. 5.

Pios hoc nomen & titulum in mundo oportet gerere, quod
Seditiosi,

Seditiosi, ac Schismatici, ac infinitorum malorum Authores sunt. Idem ibidem.

Heu, heu, Domine ! ipsi sunt in persecutione tua primi, qui in Ecclesia tua videntur principatum diligere, & gerere principatum. Bern. de Conver. S. Pauli, Serm. I.

Ignosci potuit simpliciter errantibus : post inspirationem vero, & revelationem factam, sine ignorantia venia peccatur. Cypr. Ep. 63.

Qui vero me errare existimant, etiam atque etiam diligenter, quæ sunt dicta, considerent, ne fortassis ipsi errent. August. De Bono Persever.

These Sayings may be Englished as followeth :

Let us not regard or minde what some have done before us, but what *Christ*, who is before all, hath first done.

They take a course never to attain unto wisdom, who, without Judgement, approve of the Inventions of their Fore-Fathers ; and like unto Sheep, are led by others.

Sometimes we let pass great Errors [as if they were Truths] being perswaded [hereunto] by the Authority of Great Men.

The

The Errors of others should not move us to follow, but to look about us.

It is most honest [and honourable] to follow the steps of our Fore-Fathers, if they have gone before in a Right Way.

It is no good Peace or Agreement that is made between Shepherds and Wolves.

Accursed be that Charity and Accord, for the conservation [and maintenance] whereof, the Word of God must be endangered.

Godly [and good] men must be content in the World to bear the name and title of being Seditious, Schismatical, and the Authors of a thousand Mischiefs.

Alas, Lord, alas ! they are the prime men in persecuting thee, who are seen to affect Primacy in thy Church, and to bear Rule there.

God might pardon them, whilst they simply [and for want of Knowledge] went astray : but when they have received the Truth by Inspiration and Revelation, they sin without any allowance of Favour for their Ignorance.

They who think I am in an Error, let them again and again diligently consider what hath been said, lest (haply) themselves prove to be the Men that err.

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